

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE
STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

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Price 5 Cents.

THE BOY CANOEIST;

OR, OVER 1,000 MILES IN A CANOE.

By JAS. C. MERRITT.



"Time!" yelled the mayor, his watch in hand. Splash! went the paddle, and the canoe went skimming away. The Yale crew gave their famous Yale yell, and the spectators along the river bank made the welkin ring with their shouts of encouragement.

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The Boy Canoeist;

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OVER 1,000 MILES IN A CANOE.

By JAS. C. MERRITT.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHALLENGE AND THE YALE CREW BOYS' ACCEPTANCE.

"A three or four mile rowing match may do for a 'dress parade' display, and enable gamblers to bet money on the result, but the test of endurance as well as skill is in something like a 1,000 mile trip. Why don't some of you fellows go in for something of that kind. Four miles—bah!"

The speaker was a stalwart, gray-mustached man, who had been an interested spectator of a rowing match between Harvard and Yale college boys. His listeners were the Yale crew, who had won the race. He had won a handsome pile on the race, and was, therefore, in good humor.

"I am no more afraid of a thousand miles than I am of ten, sir," replied young Barry Walton. "We have never thought of such a distance, that's all," and he looked handsome and resolute in his rowing suit, his muscular arms brown as berries and bared to his shoulders.

"Now, such a pull as that would show the stuff a rower is made of," remarked the man. "What does a row of three or four miles amount to? It's all over in a few minutes, and people hurrah as if some great feat had been performed."

"Did you ever do any rowing, sir?" Barry asked, looking round at the man.

"Yes, many a time; but when I was at Yale, where I graduated before you were born, young man, they didn't have any athletic clubs as in the present day. I used to do some tall walking, too. With all your training, you fellows go in for spurts. What you want is the muscle that will stand the strain of continuous pulling."

"Did you ever do any continuous pulling, sir?"

"Yes. I once rowed from Olean, on the Alleghany, to Pittsburgh, in Pennsylvania, a distance of 285 miles in ten days."

"Twenty-eight and a half miles a day—that's nothing. I can do that in five days, and have a day or two to spare," and Barry looked contemptuously at the man as he spoke.

"You can, eh?"

"Yes, sir, I can—so can any member of Yale's crew. Bah! That isn't anything."

"Young man, would you like to try it?"

"I wouldn't mind if you offer an inducement."

"I'll give you an inducement, if that is all you want," said the man. "I'll pay for the boat or canoe, and give you a gold medal, to cost not less than one hundred dollars, if you can row from Olean, N. Y., to Pittsburg in less than five days."

"Do you mean it?" Barry asked.

"I do. Here's my card," and the man gave him his card, which read, simply:

J. D. COUCH, New York.

"I will pay all expenses, too," he added, after a pause of some minutes. "I want to show you fellows that we old boys of the classes of thirty years ago are not behind you in anything."

Barry laughed and asked.

"But what will you think if I make it in the five days?"

"Think? Why, you can't do it, that's all," said the man.

"But you don't answer my question," returned Barry.

"What would I think? Why, man alive, I'd think I didn't know anything about rowing when I was a boy, that's all."

"You would acknowledge that Yale of to-day is ahead of Yale thirty years ago, too, wouldn't you?"

"Yes, of course I would. "But you can't do it, that's all."

"Well, I am going to do it," said Barry. "You say you will pay for the canoe?"

"Yes, and all expenses, and the canoe to be yours after the trip."

"Where can I send the bills for the canoe?" Barry asked.

Mr. Couch wrote his business address on the card, saying:

"You can inquire of any New York banker as to my responsibility."

"All right, sir. I'll have the canoe made right away, and make the trip during vacation, and if I don't make the distance in less than five days I'll pay all the bills myself."

"You can't do it, young man," said the elderly man, shaking his head. "I've been over the route, and know what I am talking about."

"How is the river?"

"When it's full it's navigable up to Olean, a distance of 285 miles. In low water there are some rapids and shoals, but always deep enough to float a canoe."

"Then I'll go and make it in less than five days," said Barry. "Just to show you and the world that the Yale crew can turn out rowers who can pull long distances as well as short ones. When I have done that I'll go on down the Ohio and make over 1,000 miles just for a summer trip."

"How old are you, Barry?" the man asked.

"I am not nineteen yet, sir. You may call me a boy. I won't jump on you if you do."

"I'll call you a man if you beat my record." And the white-mustached man shook his hand cordially as he made the promise.

The members of the Yale crew crowded around Barry Walton, and congratulated him on his pluck in taking up the challenge of the old Yale graduate of thirty years before.

"I am going to show those old fellows that they didn't know anything about rowing thirty years ago," said Barry. "There were some strong men in those days as well as now, but they didn't train as we do now. Who ever heard of a man walking 500 miles in six days before the recent walking craze broke out? Why, those old fellows lived in the days of small things. Young America can show the old ones some things they never dreamed of."

The Yale crew, having won the race with Harvard, returned to their club house and received an ovation from their friends and admirers. They sat down to a sumptuous banquet that evening, where toasts, songs and speeches marked the rejoicing over their hard-won laurels.

It was told by one of the speakers that Barry Walton was going to make a 1,000 mile trip during vacation to demonstrate that college crews were trained for endurance as well as skill. They hailed him as their champion.

"And I won't forget that the Yale crew watches me," he said, amid a hurricane of applause.

Before he went to bed that night Barry Walton drew on paper the style of canoe he intended to have built, and when Adolph Essington saw it, he exclaimed:

"Great Scott, Barry! You are not going to have such a thing as that made, are you?"

"Yes, I am thinking of it," he replied. "Don't you like it?"

"Thunder—no! Why, it looks like an old style Indian canoe!"

"Yes, it does, somewhat."

"Why don't you have something made like the Yale boat?"

"Oh, that would never do," returned Barry.

"Why not?"

"Because I would have no room to move in at all. Just think of sitting in one position four or five days, without room to move your feet. I want a place where I can stand up without danger of capsizing, as well as lie down in my blanket to sleep."

"Ah! I never thought of that," said Adolph.

"Well, I am thinking of all those things now. You see, I'll have to take some food and cooking utensils along with me, a gun and fishing tackle, and all that sort of thing, you know."

"Look here, Barry, do you know I think there's a catch in this thing."

"A catch!"

"Yes, a regular sell."

"How?"

"Hanged if I know; but you had better be on the lookout for something of the kind."

Barry scratched his head for a minute or two, and then said:

"I don't see how there can be any catch to it. But if he is putting up a job on me I'll 'job' his head for him as sure as my name is Barry Walton."

"Well, you want to look out and see that he doesn't get the laugh on you. Suppose he should say you did not row all the way, that the current floated you a hundred miles or so? What could you say then?"

"Great Scott! I didn't think of that!" exclaimed Barry. "I'll see him to-morrow and ask him about it."

"You want to know if you have to shoulder your canoe and carry it around a gorge of driftwood, or some other obstruction, too," suggested Adolph.

"Yes, I'll see about that the first thing, for I don't intend to be laughed at," and he made a note of the things his friend had mentioned.

He went to bed and slept till morning, but he did not fail to dream of his proposed trip, and half the night he was battling with rapids and dangerous waterfalls. Once he dreamed that he had been capsized in the rapids, and was floundering about to save himself when he floundered out of bed, and awoke to find himself on the floor.

"That'll do," he said to himself, as he "tumbled" to the situation.

As soon as he ate his breakfast the next morning he went in search of Mr. Couch, whom he found preparing to return to New York.

"Hello!" the gentleman greeted. "I hope you haven't come to tell me that you have backed out of that canoe trip?"

"No, I have not. But I have come to ascertain if there is any catch in this thing?"

"Catch! Why, no, man! What do you mean?"

"I mean this—you might say at Pittsburg that I didn't row all the way—that the current carried me so many miles, or that I had to carry my canoe on my shoulder a mile or so round some rapids or log drift, or something of that sort. Now, how about that?"

"Why, bless your soul, man! I never dreamed of such a thing. You can float all the way if you want to, and carry the canoe on your shoulders half the distance if you like, and I'll call it square. I am a square man. All I require is that your canoe is not to be placed on any kind of a conveyance save your own shoulders, nor are you to get on any kind yourself. Do you see the point?"

"Yes, sir. It's all right. You may have me watched all the way if you like," and Barry gave him his hand as he spoke.

"I am glad I came, for I mean business."

"Glad to hear that. I'm going to New York on the next train. Send along your bills for the building of the canoe as fast as you please, and they shall be paid."

Barry went back to his quarters, and went to work drawing designs for a canoe which was to be very light, very strong, and easy to paddle.

When he had completed his drawing he took it to the man who had built the racing boats for many clubs in the country, and got the head mechanic to make an estimate of the cost to make it.

The estimate was soon given, and he was so well satisfied that the canoe was just what he wanted that he ordered it to be made without delay.

CHAPTER II.

THE CANOE—DOWN THE PICTURESQUE ALLEGHANY.

In order to make a canoe that would stand hard thumps Barry had called for a rawhide lining, made waterproof and so strong that nothing short of a sharp-pointed knife could penetrate it.

"No snags through the bottom for me, if you please," he said, in speaking to Adolph Essington about it.

"Just the thing," said Adolph. "How in the world did you come to think of it?"

"I've thought of a boat of that kind often," replied Barry;

"and I've thought, too, that I would have one made some day. You see, it will give without breaking, and water can't get through it."

"Yes, just the thing."

"Couch thinks I'll get smashed on rocks or snags and lose the time repairing damages or getting another boat. I'll show him that I am right up to snuff every time."

The Yale crew had nothing else to talk about from that day till the hour for starting on the long trip came.

The canoe was finished—shaped like the old style Indian birch canoe, the bill paid, and then shipped by rail to Olean, on the upper waters of the Alleghany.

Barry Walton and the entire Yale crew took the train for New York. There they were joined by Mr. Couch and quite a party of men who were fond of all kinds of athletic sports.

In due time the party reached Olean, where Mr. Couch was at his old home, for he was born and reared on a farm a mile or two outside the town.

Barry and his chum, Adolph Essington, put up at a hotel, and soon after supper went to see about the canoe. It was in charge of a man who had been sent on with it.

"Have you got everything I ordered?" Barry asked of Tom Aiken, the man in charge.

"Yes, sir," replied Tom, "and all fixed."

"Sure?"

"Yes, sir."

"Let's see it."

He led the way into the room where it had been stored since noon of the day before.

There, on the floor, lay the most symmetrical canoe eye had ever seen.

It was about twelve feet long, twenty-six inches wide in the center, light and strong.

In both ends were air-tight compartments that would render sinking impossible, even with everything on board.

Everything, gun, ammunition, oil stove, cooking utensils, provisions and blankets, were secured so that no loss could occur, even in a capsized.

"No matter what happens to her the cargo is safe, Dolph," remarked Barry, as he looked at the beauty.

"Yes, so I see, and I must say I never saw anything like it in all my life," said Dolph. "But look here, Barry, where are your oar locks?"

"I haven't got any—don't want any," replied Barry.

Dolph whistled.

"What are you going to use—sails?"

"No—paddles—a double paddle."

"Whew!"

"Thunder!" exclaimed Barry, "did you think I would go down any strange river backward? What do you take me for?"

"You can't make much time that way," said Dolph.

"Don't you worry about that. With a double paddle to strike right and left alternately I can go skimming over the water like a duck. Why, that canoe won't draw over three inches of water at the most."

"Well, well! You've been rowing all the time, and now you are going to paddle! The boys will be disgusted when they see it, Barry."

"You are mistaken. Canoes are never rowed. They are paddled, and when properly built make the best time imaginable. You see, I want to see ahead of me as I go downstream, in order to get shots at game, avoid dangerous places, and enjoy the scenery."

"Yes—yes. I understand."

They returned to the hotel, and the next day preparations for the start were begun early. He was to leave at high noon sharp. As the papers in the country had made mention of the facts, hundreds of people came into the town to see him off, so that it looked very much like a holiday.

Barry went down to look at the river and found it to be a beautiful stream.

"Just think of it, Dolph," he said to his chum as he gazed at the flowing current, "all this water will go into the Gulf of Mexico, more than 2,000 miles away."

"You are not thinking of going clear to the Gulf, are you?"

"I don't know. I may take the notion to do so. It will depend upon how I enjoy myself as I go along."

Mr. Couch came down to the river with a party of ladies and gentlemen, friends of his, and said:

"I have seen your canoe. It is a very unique thing. I see you have prepared for accidents, though."

"Of course I have. I would be a fool to expect to go such a distance without meeting with accidents of some kind."

"Yes. Did you ever see anything of this kind before?"

"I never did."

"Ever sleep out in the woods?"

"Never."

"Well, you will see some of the wildest country you ever laid eyes on when you get down into Pennsylvania, and when you strike the loggers you'll have a hard crowd to deal with."

"You can't scare me, Mr. Couch," said Barry, laughing. "I am not a child to be frightened by ghost stories, or any other kind of stories, for that matter."

"Why, bless your soul, my boy!" exclaimed Couch, "nothing was farther from my mind! I was thinking to tell you where you might expect trouble, having been over the same route myself."

"That was thirty years ago," said Barry, laughing. "Things have changed somewhat since then."

"Of course, and yet you'll find some localities that have seen no change in one hundred years. Just remember that I told you that."

"I'll remember it. I see that I've got an hour yet," and he looked at his watch.

"Yes, just one hour," replied Mr. Couch. "You had better see about getting your canoe down to the water."

Barry and Dolph went back to the room where the canoe was kept, and there met the rest of the Yale crew.

"Boys," he said, "I've got just one hour. Those of you who can do so had better take a run down to Pittsburg in about three days, for I'll be there if I'm alive by that time. But I'll shake hands with you now, as there's such a crowd down at the river that I may not get the chance there," and he shook hands with the entire crew. "On your way back home," he added, "stop at Elmira and see my mother. She knows every one of you well, for I've sent her your photos, and written her all about your weaknesses."

"For that reason we won't stop here," said one of the crew.

"Don't think I have ruined your reputations," he said, laughing. "On the contrary, I was careful to impress upon her mind the fact that I was in good company."

He took up the canoe on his shoulder and marched boldly down to the river with it, the Yale crew following in marching order behind him.

The crowd broke into wild cheers when he hove in sight, which became still more wild and boisterous when he placed it on the water, got in himself, and received the pair of double paddles from Tom Aiken.

The crowd became excited when he took up the paddle and held himself in readiness to start at the signal, which the mayor of the town was to give.

"Time!" yelled the mayor, his watch in hand.

Splash! went the paddle, and the canoe went skimming away like a thing of life.

The Yale crew gave their famous Yale yell, and the multitude of spectators along the river bank made the welkin ring with their shouts of encouragement.

Barry soon left them far behind, for the speed of the canoe

was very fast. The current there was fully three miles per hour.

"I am off now," he said to himself, as he glided over the placid bosom of the river, "and I am going to show them that a boy canoeist has some staying powers and pluck as well as some older men I have heard of. I'm going to have a lonesome time, I guess, but I've made up my mind on that score and won't mind it. I'll bet the crew will have a good time in Olean to-night."

He was now fairly launched on his long cruise down one of the most picturesque streams in America. It was midsummer. The season was dry, and the river was quite low, the water very clear and warm.

But all along the river he saw splendid dairy farms, and here and there caught sight of shy maidens attending flocks and listening to honeyed words from sighing swains at the same time.

Some of them seemed to have heard of his coming, and were on the lookout to wave him a God-speed on his way.

CHAPTER III.

A SINGULAR MISHAP.

The day waned and the sun sank down behind the trees, while the birds were seen going to their roosts for the night. Twilight began to gather, and Barry concluded that he would lay down his paddle and bathe his heated face, preparatory to eating his supper.

When he did so he felt greatly refreshed, and went for the basket, in which he found plenty of cold roast chicken, with bread and butter in abundance.

"This is not bad fare," he remarked, as he proceeded to satisfy a ravenous appetite. "I have eaten much worse meals and paid more for them. This isn't ice-water, but I've bathed in much worse, and didn't mind it. Besides, I am going about three miles per hour as I eat, so I don't have to stop 'ten minutes for refreshments.' I don't see why one shouldn't enjoy a trip of this kind; I am sure I do. I can stand up and paddle if I want to, which is change enough when one gets very tired of sitting. I wonder how far I have come since noon to-day?"

He ate heartily and drank a cup of the river water, after which he took up the paddle again and went skimming lightly over the water.

The stars came out, and their silvery specks were reflected in the mirror-like surface of the river; but he paddled on, determined to keep up till midnight, at which time he would seek sleep and make an early start in the morning.

About nine o'clock he saw the lights of a village, and heard the voices of children playing in the streets as they chased each other about. He came near stopping to inquire how far he had come, but finally decided not to do so.

At about eleven o'clock he saw a white sand bar, and the smooth, white sand looked so inviting that he concluded to stop there, draw the canoe out on the beach and sleep in it.

Accordingly he paddled to it, the clear starlight giving him a pretty good view of it. But the prow of the canoe disturbed the slumbers of a big water moccasin as it grated on the sand, and he glided lazily off into the water.

Barry saw him, gave a shudder, and proceeded to push off again, muttering:

"I can't stand such bedfellows as that. I'd rather paddle all night and nod at the same time."

He went on down the river, looking at his watch occasionally, by the aid of a match, to see what time it was.

"It's past midnight," he said, "and I haven't selected any place to sleep yet. There's no falls on the river, for steamboats run up to Olean at certain seasons. What's the matter with

sleeping in the canoe and letting her float? Enough said!" and he prepared his bed with two blankets, laid down and tried to compose himself to sleep.

He finally succeeded in dropping into a gentle sleep, and was sleeping soundly when he was awakened by hearing a voice exclaim:

"By gosh! Hyer's a man in it!"

He looked up and saw a rough-looking farmer seated in a batteau, and peering over at him in his canoe.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, rising up to a sitting posture.

"Hello, too!" returned the man. "What mout be yer name, mister?"

"My name is Barry Walton—going down to Pittsburg," replied Barry.

"Gosh! almighty!" gasped the farmer. "Gwine ter Pittsburg in er canoe?"

"Yes, sir. I left Olean at noon yesterday. Can you tell me how far I have come?"

"Come all the way in this hyer canoe?"

"Yes, sir."

"Gosh!"

"How far is it to Olean?"

"Over 100 miles, mister."

"Well, that isn't bad," said Barry. "It's now nearly six o'clock. I've been 18 hours on the way, and didn't paddle hard either."

"Gosh!" gasped the farmer again. "I thought ther canoe was loose an' come fur it. Thar's my house over thar," and he pointed to a farmhouse in sight on the right bank of the river.

"Can your wife get me up a good hot breakfast in half an hour for half a dollar?" Barry asked.

"Gosh, yes!"

Twenty-five cents is all any one dared charge for a meal out in that section, and the offer of double that amount nearly took the farmer's breath away.

He accordingly tied up to the river bank and went up to the house with the farmer just as the sun was peeping over the tree tops. The farmer's wife was astonished to see a young man come in with her husband, and hurried to add some eggs and fresh honey to the other good things already prepared.

Barry ate a hearty breakfast, paid for it, and then returned to his canoe, accompanied by the farmer, and five minutes later was skimming the river like a duck.

"A good hot breakfast starts one all right for a day's work," he said to himself, as he paddled right and left. "If I can make another hundred miles by sunrise to-morrow I think I'll have another hot breakfast—if I can find it."

About ten o'clock that day he came to another village, where he bought a dozen eggs to take along with him.

Thus far nothing had occurred to break the monotony of the trip. He had met with no adventure of any kind, and was beginning to wonder if it was to go on that way to the end, when he saw a man ahead of him baiting the hooks on his fish line.

The line extended from bank to bank, with hooks attached two feet apart. The fisherman was seated in a batteau, and the line lay across it.

The fisherman looked hard at him to see if the boyish-looking young fellow in the canoe was joking or talking seriously, but made no movement toward lowering the line to allow him to pass downstream.

"Be you goin' ter Pittsburg, sure nuff?" he asked.

"Yes, if you will drop that line and let me pass," returned Barry, now reversing his course to avoid being carried against the line by the current.

"Wal, I can't drop her, stranger," the fisherman said, "but I'll hold her up for yer," and he stood up and raised the line as high as he could for him to pass under.

"Thanks—that's all right," and Barry gave a few vigorous strokes with his paddle, and shot forward like a duck.

But he was not to get past that way. One of the hooks dangled from the line some two feet or more, and caught him by the coat collar.

In an instant he was jerked backward, floundering vigorously to avoid going overboard. His weight and struggles pulled the fisherman out of his batteau, and sent him into the water with a yell and a splash.

The fall of the fisherman carried disaster with it, for the line, with its sinkers, jerked Barry out of the canoe like a flash of lightning and took him to the bottom!

Being a good swimmer, and knowing his ability in that respect, Barry never lost his presence of mind for a moment.

But when he found himself hooked to the line and held down by the sinkers, like a fish who had swallowed the bait and got caught, the thought flashed through his mind that he was doomed unless he could get loose.

Quick as a flash he began to pull off his coat. Ordinarily that would be but the work of two seconds or so, but now it was different. He was under water, and wet, of course. A wet coat can't be thrown off as easily as a dry one, and he soon found it out.

But he finally succeeded in getting out of the coat, and came to the surface after having swallowed at least a quart of water. He was nearly strangled to death, and for a few moments beat the water wildly with his hands.

When he looked around he saw the canoe and batteau drifting away on the current, and the farmer swimming to the left bank.

He struck out for the canoe, which, strange to say, had not overturned, and soon caught up with it. But as he could not climb into it on account of its extreme propensity to capsize, he towed it ashore, and then managed to get into it.

"Say, mister!" called the farmer from the other side. "Ketch my boat, won't yer?"

Barry laughed in spite of himself. The fellow's cheek was simply sublime.

He paddled over to the other side and said to him:

"I like your gall. Get in and I'll row you out to your batteau."

"I ain't got no gall, mister," said the man. "You've got it all yerself. Yer come sailin' long down ther river an' yank me outen my boat, an' then talk erbout gall."

Barry laughed heartily, and said:

"Put it the other way, please. Here comes a man down the river. A fisherman has his line across the river, obstructing navigation in violation of all law, and when asked to drop the line deliberately raises it out of the water, hooks the man and uses him for bait, dropping the line which takes him to the bottom. The man crawls out of his coat and comes to the surface to hear the fisherman accuse him of having all the gall in the country. Mr. Fisherman, you are my candidate for president, and you don't want any better platform than your cheek."

The farmer fisherman chuckled.

"By gosh!" he exclaimed. "Yer must be a lawyer, mister! Why, blame it all, it war an accident, yer see."

"Well, maybe it was. I don't like it, all the same. There's your batteau. Get in and paddle back to the line. I want to get my coat, if the fish haven't eaten it by this time."

The fisherman got into his batteau, took up his paddle and worked vigorously against the current till he reached the line where it was tied to the limb of a tree on the right bank.

There he caught the line and began raising it, the boat gliding toward the middle of the stream as he continued to draw up the line. At last the coat appeared, and Barry secured it by cutting the hook from the line.

"Hyer, thar! I want that hook!" called the fisherman, as he saw the canoe drifting downstream.

"Come and get it," said Barry. "I have no use for it."

"Gosh darn it, man, paddle yer canoe back!"

"When I get the hook out," returned Barry, trying to get the contrary thing out of the coat collar.

"Bring it hyar an' let me git it out for yer."

Barry paid no attention to him, and the distance between them increased every moment.

Fearful of losing the hook, the fisherman dropped the line and took up his paddle to pursue him.

Barry laughed, and took up his paddle to get farther away.

"Blast yer hide, ef yer don't stop I'll shoot!" cried the farmer fisherman, taking up a shotgun from the bottom of the batteau.

Barry took up his gun from its hiding place, and leveled it at the dumfounded fisherman, saying:

"Drop that gun, or I'll drop you!"

CHAPTER IV.

BARRY SHOOTS SOME DUCKS, AND THEN PAYS FOR THEM.

"Gimme my hook," he said.

"You shan't have it," returned Barry. "I'm going to keep it to show in court."

"Show in court?"

"Yes. You tried to drown me, and I'm going to have the law on you for it."

"Gosh!" gasped the fisherman, looking first to one side of the river, and then to the other.

"I can send you up for ten years for trying to drown me," remarked Barry. "I've seen men hung for less things."

That was enough.

The fisherman laid down his gun, and took up the paddle to row ashore, visions of a vexatious law suit flitting through his mind.

Barry chuckled over the turn affairs had taken, and paddled away for a mile or two with all his might.

He paddled vigorously, and the canoe skimmed along beautifully. He was about dry, when, as he turned a bend in the river, he saw a large flock of ducks swimming about in a cove.

He gently laid down his paddle and took up the gun, which was handy to him where he sat.

Taking a good aim, he fired, and the flock rose on the wing, leaving four floundering about in the water. As they flew over him he brought down two more, one of which fell within a few feet of his canoe.

"Very good luck that," he said, as he proceeded to insert fresh cartridges in his gun.

He was about to row after the game when another flock came sailing over him quite low. He fired, and got two more.

"Well, this is sport," he said, as he looked around at the dead and wounded ducks.

"What in tarnal blazes be yer shootin' my ducks for, hey?" an angry voice asked from the river bank.

"Your ducks?" exclaimed Barry.

"Yes, my ducks, yer tarnal fool! Them's my ducks yer've shot at, an' I want er half dollar for each one of 'em."

"Great Scott!" muttered Barry, as he caught glimpses of a farmhouse and barn back in the woods a bit. "This is a go. I'd never hear the last of it if the boys get hold of it."

"Say, you! Be yer goin' ter pay for them ducks?"

"Yes, I am going to pay for them, of course," he replied. "I thought they were wild ducks, and——"

"Wal, yer want ter learn it if yer don't know. Sich green-horns as yer be ain't got no business with a gun in the country."

"I guess you are right about that," said Barry, sending the canoe into the bank near where the farmer stood. "A man can't know everything, you know. I know the difference between a duck and a duncan."

"What's a duncan?"

"Why, don't you know?"

"No—what is it?"

"Well, a man who doesn't know what a duncan is has no business living outside the lunatic asylum. Here's four dollars for eight ducks. The ducks are mine, of course."

"What d'yer want with 'em?"

"Give 'em away to somebody who wants 'em."

"Give 'em to me, then?"

"I will for fifty cents apiece."

"Why not give 'em to me as well as anybody else?"

"Because you are such a greenhorn as not to know what a duncan is. You are the greenest countryman I ever saw in all my life."

The young girl who had brought the gun to her father looked at the handsome youth in the canoe, and blushed like a rose. She was indignant, though, at the way he called her father a greenhorn.

Barry was getting in his revenge for having been rasped by the old man for not knowing wild ducks from tame ones.

"Young man," said the old farmer, "I think a little birch oil would do yer good, an' if yer'll come outen that boat I'll give yer a dose."

"None of your country medicine for me, thank you," said Barry, pushing off from shore and proceeding to gather up the game he had shot.

The farmer was mad, and but for his daughter he would have made trouble for the young canoeist, as he was a very determined sort of a man.

Having gathered up the ducks he had paid for at such a high rate, Barry turned and went on his way down the river.

He could not help laughing at himself as he looked at the ducks and thought of the price he paid for them.

"Hanged if I know whether they were wild or tame ones yet," he said to himself. "The others flew higher and faster than I ever knew tame ones to do. That old rascal may have played me for a fool for aught I know. But I got even with him on that duncan racket. Ha, ha, ha! He'll ask everybody he meets what a duncan is. He had a deuce of a good-looking daughter, though."

Some ten miles below the scene of the duck shooting he met a tea party of young people, who came from a village about a mile back from the water.

Among them was a young girl of ten summers, modest and beautiful. He rowed up to the banks, and said

"Little girl, here are some ducks for you!" and he held up a brace of them for inspection.

"Oh, thanks, ever so much!" said the young girl.

He threw her the brace, and took up another to toss after them.

"What! four ducks?" the girl cried, her eyes distending like saucers.

"Yes, eight of them," he said. "I can't get home with them myself."

The girls and youths crowded around the lucky little maiden and congratulated her.

"You are the luckiest one of the party to-day, Louise," cried one of the other girls.

"Yes—oh, I'm ever so much obliged," and she looked the gratitude she felt.

"All right—good-by to all of you," said he, pushing off from the shore.

"Say, mister, wait and have dinner with us," sang out one of the youths in the party.

Barry looked at his watch and saw that it was pretty near his dinner time.

"Well, I don't mind," he replied. "I don't think I can eat with better company."

"Of course you can't. Come right outer that boat, and we'll have dinner right away."

Barry landed, and was immediately surrounded by the entire party, who admired his dress and make-up, together with his manly bearing.

He soon told his story—where he was from and where he was going. That made him a hero in the eyes of the girls, who had never before seen a real live Yale student.

The dinner was a regular picnic layout, and Barry had an appetite to do it justice.

He spent half an hour with the party, and when he left them they gave him a good send-off, making the welkin ring with cheers till he passed out of sight.

"They are a jolly crowd," he said, as he went round a bend which hid them from view. "That little girl will not forget the day a strange young man gave her eight dead ducks."

CHAPTER V.

PASSING THE RAPIDS.

Quite late in the afternoon after leaving the picnic party Barry saw that he was approaching a very shallow place in the river. He could see many stones projecting above the surface of the water, and still other places where the water boiled into foam as it dashed over the rocks in the bed of the stream.

"Hello!" he exclaimed. "Breakers ahead, as sure as I live! I wonder if they are dangerous? I draw so little water that I don't think there is any danger. I'll try it, anyhow," and he guided the canoe into what seemed to be the deepest current.

The canoe went swiftly along on the current, passing boulders within six inches, and in some places he saw sharp-pointed rocks, which would utterly demolish any craft that struck them. Suddenly he saw straight ahead a perfect bed of white foam with no passage through it that promised immunity from danger.

"Great Scott!" he gasped, as he stared at the peril. "I'm in for it, and no mistake!"

The next moment the canoe was whirling round and round in the sea of foam.

Thump! Thump! Rasp!

His hair stood on end.

He did not fear for himself, as a few bruises did not frighten him, but he did apprehend that the canoe might sustain damages that would cause him to lose a good deal of time.

Thump! Thump!

Once he was almost thrown out, but he succeeded in maintaining his balance, and in a few minutes more he was riding in smooth water again.

"By George!" he exclaimed, as he glanced back at the rapids, "had the inside of this canoe not been rawhided I'd have been wrecked that time as sure as the sun shines."

He rowed to the bank, got out, and dragged the canoe out to inspect damages. There were three places where the jagged edges of stones had inflicted damages that would have been fatal had not the rawhide case inside been there. As it was no leak occurred, and he launched the canoe again and went on his way.

He was not down in the State of Pennsylvania, and the hills on either side began to assume the proportions of mountains.

Settlements were few and far between, and only the great lumber forests remained.

"I guess I won't find any hot supper to-night, unless I cook it myself," he said, looking around at the immense stretch of forest. "But I can do that, I guess," and he pulled away with patient industry for another hour.

By and by he passed out of that wooded, hilly section, and came in sight of beautiful farms again. Then he heard the whistle of a railroad engine in the distance.

"Oh, I'm not out of the way of civilization yet," he said. "I'll bet all I'm worth that I strike a town before I am a week older."

He won his bet half an hour later, when he came in sight of the beautiful village of Warren, near the junction of another river. The stream here nearly doubled in size, and a railroad ran along its right bank for nearly 100 miles.

"Oh, I won't get lonesome now," he said, when he saw what company he would have to keep him from going to sleep. "Railroad trains passing every hour will wake me up lively."

The people of Warren had been looking for him, for they had read in the papers that he had started. But they didn't expect him so soon, and his sudden appearance was quite a surprise.

All the young people in the village came running down to the river to see him, and he stopped to shake hands with them.

Among the men he saw a man whom he met in Olean in company with Mr. Couch.

"Ah! I saw you in Olean," he said to the man. "You came by rail, did you not?"

"Yes, of course," was the reply.

"Going down to Pittsburg?"

"I don't know—I may," he replied.

"Suppose you go with me? I'll charge you nothing for passage."

The man laughed, shook his head, and remarked:

"You travel too slow for me."

"Yet I am doing pretty well, am I not?"

"I should say so. How did you manage about the rapids above here?"

"Come right through them, and got some pretty hard thumps, too."

"It's a wonder you didn't get swamped."

"Yes—my canoe got some holes knocked through the outer shell."

"Ah!"

"Yes."

"What are you going to do about it?" the man asked.

"Going to go right on through," he replied. "You don't think I would stop for such a little thing as that, do you?"

The crowd laughed, and Barry proceeded to resume his journey, amid the cheers of the crowd on the river bank.

"That fellow is watching me," he said to himself as he went down the river. "I saw him with Mr. Couch. I wonder if anybody is betting on this thing? If I thought so I'd put in some fine work."

When about five miles below Warren he heard a train of cars coming, and pretty soon after a passenger train dashed by. The passengers yelled and waved hats and handkerchiefs at him.

He waved his paddles above the canoe in graceful curves, and then raised his hat on one far above his head.

"They have all heard of the trip," he said, "and the papers are keeping accounts of every place I pass. I'll wager that it's already been telegraphed from Warren that I passed there at 3:15 P. M. to day. Well, I'm going to go through on time, and tell my adventures afterwards. That duck story is a good joke on me, though."

Just before sunset he passed Irvine, another village on the

line of the Pittsburg railroad. There another crowd of young people were assembled to greet and cheer him on his way.

"You want to look out for the rapids below here," said a man in the crowd.

"Are they worse than those at Warren?" he asked.

"I dunno; but they are bad enough," was the reply.

"How far away are they?"

"Seven miles," a dozen said in a breath.

He would reach them before darkness came on, and he pulled steadily to do so. At no time during the trip had he pulled steadily for seven miles without stopping to blow, and he succeeded in reaching the spot just as the evening star came out to look at him.

"Yes, here they are," he said, as he heard the rush of the waters over the stones below him. "They don't look any worse than the other rapids did, so I'll go right through, or try it, anyhow."

He guided the canoe as well as he could in the gathering twilight, and had gone about half way through when he felt a bump that came near knocking him out of the seat.

The canoe lodged on a big rock, and seemed on the point of careening, when it twisted off with a rasping sound that boded no good to the woodwork of the canoe. Then he drifted with the rushing, foaming current again, till it seemed as if he were going through a mill sluice.

Thump! Bumpety bump!

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Barry, as he laid flat down in the canoe to keep it from capsizing. "If I get through this I'll walk around the next rapids and carry the canoe on my shoulder."

The canoe drifted into smooth water at last, but in a used-up condition.

"It was a good thing I thought of the rawhide casing," he said to himself, as the canoe glided along down the river, "or I'd be floundering in the water by this time, with no canoe to ride in. By George, but this can go when all the woodwork is knocked off on the outside. I guess that's where Mr. Couch thought I'd get left. He'll get left if he is putting up any money on this."

After a few more stars came out Barry began to think about supper. He had rowed so hard to pass the rapids before it became dark that he had forgot all about his supper.

He had cold provisions, but he wanted something warm. He accordingly got out his little oil stove, lit it, put on the coffee pot, and at short notice he had the water boiling.

Then he put in the coffee, and the aroma of the delicious drink seemed to make him very happy. He boiled some of the eggs he had procured that morning, and in a little while was eating as appetizing a meal as he could wish.

He put out the light, restored things to their places, and took up the paddle again.

Mile after mile was passed, and he thought little of the tolerably warm evening being uncomfortable, till he ascertained that the hour of midnight had arrived.

Then, as he grew tired and sleepy, he dropped the paddles and prepared to make his bed in the bottom of the canoe.

He was soon comfortably fixed, and it was not long ere he was in the land of dreams.

CHAPTER VI.

THE STORM IN THE WILDERNESS—THE BLOODHOUNDS.

How long he slept he knew not. He was sweetly dreaming of some college racket when a boom like that of a cannon startled him, and caused him to spring up to look around him.

It was as dark as pitch.

Every star was gone, and clouds of inky blackness were overhead. The next clap of thunder told him what it was that awakened him.

"It's going to storm," he said, as a vivid flash of lightning revealed the fact that he was drifting along in the middle of the river.

He immediately proceeded to get out his water-proof cover for the canoe and button it over the top, so as to keep out the rain. Then he put on his waterproof covering himself, and sat up to witness the fury of the storm.

By and by the rain came down—one of those terrific summer showers which sometimes burst loose from the clouds and deluge the earth with water.

It poured in torrents for over an hour, and the peals of thunder and flashes of lightning were incessant.

On one side the country was rolling—the other very hilly, almost mountainous—and the rush of water down to the river kept up a roar that was grand, indeed.

"This beats anything I ever saw in my life before," he remarked, as he listened to the roaring of the elements.

Daylight came, and the clouds broke away, though numerous mountain streams poured into the river at every depression.

He was fortunate enough not to get anything in the canoe wet, and when he removed the waterproofs he was more than pleased to discover the fact that he could have lain down and slept all through the storm had he cared to do so.

Sunrise caught him in a very wild-looking country. The forest looked as though no white man had ever set foot there.

He saw a place where he thought he would like to stop and camp long enough to cook and eat his breakfast. It was a small clearing on the left bank, and it was really an inviting spot.

Rowing up to the spot, he stepped out and secured the canoe with a cord, after which he removed the oil stove, and set it going.

The water was not clear as he would like to have it for making coffee, but he did not stop to worry about that. He put the kettle on, and then proceeded to try his hand at catching fish.

He got out his tackle, procured some bait, and casting the hook into the water tied it to a limb, while he attended to other duties.

Just as the water began to boil he heard a growl, or snort, in the bushes behind him, and looking in that direction was dumfounded at seeing a full-grown black bear standing up on his hind feet, and glaring at him.

Barry well knew that deer, bears and panthers still existed in the Alleghany region, but had not given the fact a thought since he left Olean.

But now here was a big bear, evidently of an inquiring mind, come to see him, and his gun, loaded with nothing but large birdshot, in the bottom of the canoe.

"Great Scott!" groaned Barry as he glared at the beast, which was not over six paces from him. "Will he tackle me if I try to get the gun?"

He was apprehensive that if he retreated the bear would pursue and overtake him before he could get the gun. It was a trying moment. Great beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead as he pondered over the situation.

A growl from the bear suddenly startled him, and he moved cautiously toward the canoe, keeping his eyes on the bear the while.

He reached the canoe, and the bear seemed to be wondering what he was up to.

Slowly and cautiously he possessed himself of the gun, and then regained all the courage he had lost.

"Now, old fellow," he said. "If I can get close enough to you I can blow the top of your head off, birdshot though it is. I am going to see how close you will let me get to you;" and

with that he began to advance on the beast, with both triggers cocked and fingers on them.

The bear growled again, and seemed to be in the humor for a fight. But as Barry approached he seemed to scent danger, and was about to get down on all his feet to scamper away, when Barry suddenly fired, the muzzle of the gun not more than five or six feet from the bear's head at the moment.

Instead of hitting him on the head, the charge blew off the bear's nose and about two inches of his mouth.

With a fierce growl the bear turned quickly on him, raised himself to his full height, and tried to gather Barry in his arms.

Barry fired again, this time the charge entering the bear's throat, and tearing his head nearly off.

Down he went, rolling over and over on the ground in his death agony.

"Good for me!" cried Barry. "It isn't often that a man kills a big bear with two loads of birdshot."

The bear was soon dead, and Barry Walton was as happy as a child with a new toy over the fact. It was the first bear he had ever killed—the first one he ever saw in the woods, in fact, and he believed he had good reason to be proud of his success.

"But what shall I do with him?" he asked himself, as he stood looking at the game. "I can't take him with me, because he is too heavy, and I don't think I could take his skin off. I'll cut off a paw and take that along to show that I killed a bear."

He went to the canoe to get a hatchet, when the limb to which he had made fast his fish-line bobbed down and knocked his hat off.

"Hello! That's a whale!" he exclaimed, making haste to secure his hat before it rolled into the water.

The limb was pulled violently for nearly a minute, and then remained quiet again. Barry pulled up the line to find that the hook was broken and that the game was gone.

"He was a big one!" he said, as he looked at the broken hook. "This must be a fine region for the sportsman. A bear and a tremendous fish one morning before breakfast is about as good a record as any I ever heard of."

He washed his hands, made the coffee, and proceeded to boil some eggs, which, together with the cold provisions in the canoe, made a very comfortable breakfast.

He had about finished his breakfast when he heard the baying of bloodhounds back in the woods.

"Somebody is out after game," he said as he listened. "There are two bloodhounds—I know them whenever and wherever I hear them. What game can they be hunting with bloodhounds, I'd like to know? I guess I had better put things in the canoe and be moving. I've lost nearly an hour here now."

The things were placed on board the canoe again, and he turned to cut the bear's paw off. It was a more difficult task than he thought, as it took him nearly ten minutes to sever it.

When he had done so he threw it into the canoe, and then got in himself.

In the meantime the baying of the bloodhounds came nearer and nearer.

He pushed off, and went down the stream, using his paddles with the regularity of clockwork.

When about half a mile below where he shot the bear he heard a voice on the left bank of the river say:

"For God's sake row me across the river. My life is in danger!"

Barry turned quickly, shot towards the shore, and asked. "What's the matter?"

"I am pursued by bloodhounds."

"Then get in here and I'll put you across."

The man got in, and ten minutes later was on the other side of the river.

Scarcely had he disappeared from sight ere two enormous bloodhounds appeared on the other bank, plunged into the water, and swam straight for the canoe.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DEATH OF THE BLOODHOUNDS AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

The bloodhounds were big, fierce fellows, and as they swam toward the canoe Barry Walton could see the glitter of their eyes, and occasionally their white fangs.

"Hanged if I don't believe they are coming for me!" he exclaimed. "They must be on that fellow's trail, and now smell him on the canoe. I won't let 'em come up with me, though," and he gave a few vigorous strokes with the paddle which sent the canoe flying along the water like a duck.

The bloodhounds soon saw that they were being distanced, and left behind, so they gave fierce yelps, and returned to the banks, where they ran along abreast of the canoe, baying fiercely, and occasionally plunging into the water in their eagerness to get at him.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Barry. "They were chasing that fellow I took across the river, and now want to get at me because they can detect the scent of him on the canoe. How in thunder am I to shake them off and keep 'em from getting me into trouble? They'll follow me all the way to Pittsburg if I can't get rid of them or their master fails to call them off. We are going faster than their master can travel now, hence there is little likelihood of their being called off. What big, fierce fellows they are. They'd tear a man to pieces in short order if they should attack him. I'll see if they intend to follow me, and if they do I'll go up near enough to shoot them, and then push on downstream as fast as I can."

He pulled hard for an hour, making several miles in that time, and saw the two fierce creatures still pursuing him along the river bank.

"Why, if I wanted to stop anywhere for any purpose they'd tear me to pieces," he said, as he gazed at them. "I may as well attend to them now as at any other time." And he turned the canoe toward the left bank and sent it forward to within twenty feet of the two powerful brutes.

Then he stopped and picked up his gun. The two dogs sprang into the water and swam toward him.

One was several feet in advance of the other.

When he was within three or four feet of the canoe Barry thrust the muzzle of his shotgun almost against his head and pulled the trigger.

The dog never made a yelp, but sank down out of sight, and in less than one minute later the other one followed him.

"It looks like cruelty to shoot them," said Barry, as he reloaded his gun, "but my life is worth more to me than all the dogs in the world. Besides, I don't know any more merciless animal than the bloodhound, so I guess I've done right."

He put the gun back in its place, and took up the paddle again.

But ere he had made a dozen strokes he was hailed from the left bank with:

"Say, you!"

"Hello! Who are you?"

"I'm Joe Nance."

"Glad to know you. I hope you are well, Mr. Nance," and Barry kept on using his paddle for all he was worth.

"Say, you!" called Nance again.

"Well, what is it?" Barry asked, still paddling.

"Them was Sid Bellamy's dogs you shot just now."

"I can't help that," replied Barry. "Sid Bellamy's dogs

mustn't bother me—nor any other man's dogs, for that matter."

"What'd yer shoot 'em for?"

"Didn't you see 'em swim out to me?"

"Yes."

"Well, what more do you want to know?"

Joe Nance didn't know, and in a minute or two the canoe was too far away for him to continue the conversation with the occupant of it.

"The owner of those dogs must live somewhere about here," said Barry to himself, "or that fellow would not have known them. I'll get as far away as I can, anyhow," and he pulled away with all his might, and in a very few minutes he was out of sight of the man.

Half an hour later Joe Nance was telling Sid Bellamy, the owner of the dogs, and two other men, how he saw a young fellow in a canoe shoot the two bloodhounds, and then make haste to get away, rowing downstream with all his might.

Bellamy and his companions, one of whom was a constable, were furious when they heard the story. They spurred their horses at full speed down to the village a couple of miles below, left their steeds there, and crossed over the river to a little railroad station.

An hour later they boarded a train going down the river, and took seats at a window, where they could see everything on the water as they passed.

Ten miles below where they boarded the train they saw the canoe.

Two miles below there was a station where the train stopped.

They got off and waited on the river bank for the canoe—each armed with a gun.

By and by the canoe hove in sight, and they concealed themselves in a clump of bushes to avoid being seen by the canoeist.

"Hello, ther!" Bellamy hailed, when he came within range.

"Hello!" returned Barry.

"Come ashore, please. I want to see you," said Bellamy.

It was an unusual request to come from strangers, and he was disposed to ignore the request.

"If you don't come ashore I'll fire on you!" said Bellamy.

"The deuce you will!" exclaimed Barry, in amazement. "What in thunder do you want?"

"Come and see."

"I won't do it till I know what you want."

"Well, if you don't you will go the rest of your way a dead man," said Bellamy.

"Do you want to rob me?"

"No, but I want to see you, though. Come along, now."

Barry turned the canoe toward the shore, and ran up to where they were standing.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"Why, hang it, Bellamy!" exclaimed one of the men. "He's not the man!"

Bellamy stared at him in the utmost astonishment.

"No," he answered; "but he may be the one in the canoe we are looking for."

Barry began to understand.

"Did you shoot two dogs up the river to-day?" the man asked of Barry.

"Yes, I did."

"Ah! I want pay for 'em, or I'll have blood!" And the man's eyes grew green with rage.

Barry saw that he had a very mad man to deal with, and that unless he managed to get him into a reasonable mood he would have serious trouble with him.

Taking up his gun he stepped ashore and said:

"I am willing to do what's right, sir, and more than that your threats can't make me do."

"You'll pay for those dogs or kill me—you understand?"

"Well, I'll tell you plainly that I'll kill you before I'll pay for them." And Barry held his gun in position to shoot should the man make any hostile demonstration.

But one of the other men, who proved to be a constable, was a cool sort of a fellow. He laid a hand on Bellamy's arm, and said:

"Hold on, Sid. Let me attend to this. Keep cool," and then turning to Barry asked:

"Why did you shoot 'm, young man?"

"Ah! Why didn't you ask that question, instead of talking about blood and all that sort of thing? Those dogs chased me ten miles, and several times plunged into the river and tried to drag me out of my canoe. I endeavored to row away from them, but they kept up with me on the banks. I am rowing down to Pittsburg on my vacation, and have to stop at places. Those dogs were as dangerous as two panthers. What was I to do? What could I do? I shot them, as you would have done, and if a court of law says I did wrong I'll pay for them—and not before."

"I say, Sid, he is not to blame," said the constable, turning to Bellamy.

"How do you know he has told the truth?" Bellamy sullenly asked.

"How do you know I haven't told the truth?" Barry boldly asked. "Call me a liar and see how it will work."

"Keep cool, now, both of you," said the constable. "I'll shoot the man who fires first! I am an officer of the law. It is not reasonable to suppose that a stranger would shoot the dogs, Sid, unless they attacked him, and Nance told us that the dogs had swam out to the canoe where they were shot."

"Yes. That's what he said."

"He told the truth, then," added Barry. "I was sorry to have to shoot them, but there was no help for it."

"I wouldn't take \$100 for each of them," growled Bellamy.

"And I wouldn't take one million dollars for my life," said Barry.

"They wouldn't have hurt you."

"Bah! Don't take me for a fool. If I should sue you for having been chased ten miles by your bloodhounds the law would give me more than \$100 for each dog."

"Yes, that's so," said the constable, looking round at Bellamy.

"Bah!" said Bellamy, who was not to be easily reconciled to the loss of his dogs.

"Bah for you!" returned Barry. "If you want to fight about it just step off ten paces and let your friend give the word."

"Bah!"

"Bah!"

"Come, now, keep cool," said the constable.

"Take him away or I'll give him a load of buckshot!" exclaimed Barry, leveling his gun at him. "I've got the drop on him; move, now, and keep your gun on your shoulder."

Bellamy turned pale when he saw the snap he had gotten into, and turned and marched away up toward the station about one hundred yards away, never once looking back.

"Now, I'll bid you good-day, gentlemen," said Barry stepping into the canoe. "There's no harm done, but I s'pose it's no fault of his," and laying down his gun he took up the paddle and glided away out into the stream.

He waved his hand at him, but the enraged owner of the bloodhounds made no response.

"He is one of those kind of people who think everybody else should suffer rather than defend himself against him or his," said Barry, looking back at him. "He can never forgive me for not letting his dogs tear me to pieces, and now I can hardly forgive myself for not shooting them when they first plunged into the river after me. I hope I won't meet him again, but if I do I'll have to be on my guard against him, for he is a mean man, who wouldn't hesitate to take advantage of one."

Ten minutes later Barry was out of sight of Bellamy and his two friends. He was making good time and enjoying the scenery along the river banks.

He had now reached the mountainous part of the State, and in some places the bluffs were hundreds of feet above the water, with trees overhanging as if to come down with a crash.

It was at the foot of one of these bold bluffs that he caught a glimpse of a buck and doe. They were drinking, and when they saw him they raised their heads and glared at him, as if they thought him a novelty and not at all dangerous.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed, laying down the paddle and taking up his gun. "I am caught with two birdshot charges! I wonder if they will stand there long enough for me to put in buckshot!"

He tried to remove the cartridges, but in doing so he alarmed the deer, and they darted away up the bluffs and disappeared among the bushes.

"Well, if that isn't luck over the left!" he exclaimed. "Why didn't I think to put buckshot cartridges in? I'll bet I'll be prepared for the next bear or deer that shows up," and he forthwith substituted the heavy cartridges for the lighter ones, and then took up the paddle again.

Half an hour later he heard a train coming, and when it went whirling by he thought he saw the dark face of Sid Bellamy among the passengers.

"By George! there's that fellow Bellamy!" he exclaimed. "He has followed me as sure as the sun shines, and I've got to look out for him, or he'll pop me over from the river bank somewhere. He may get off at the next station and hide in the woods somewhere, and no one would ever know what became of Barry Walton. Here goes for the other side of the river!"

He sent the canoe over to the left bank, and continued the route under the shadows of the trees and hills on that side.

The current was not so strong on that side, but it was safer, and that was the point with him just then.

A few miles further down he came in sight of another station, and was glad to see that the river was about one hundred yards wide at that point.

He looked everywhere for his enemy, but failed to see him.

"Ah! He has gone downstream a mile or two to find a secure place where no witness would be likely to see him! Barry, old boy, you want to be very cautious. You are not ready to shuffle off this mortal coil yet."

He kept the gun lying where he could pick it up on very short notice, and continued to paddle his way, keeping a sharp lookout for his man on the west bank.

Two miles below the station he came to a very wild-looking spot, where the bushes grew thick right down to the water's edge and high up on the steep hillside back of it. He suspected that it was just such a spot that Bellamy would select for his work, if he really did have any such design.

He laid down the paddle and let the canoe drift with the current, which, over on the left side, was quite slow, while he scanned the bushes on the opposite side for his enemy.

Slowly the canoe drifted, and he was beginning to think that perhaps, after all, he had misjudged Bellamy. Yet he

CHAPTER VIII.

ANOTHER MEETING WITH BELLAMY.

As he passed the railroad station Barry saw Bellamy standing on the platform, gun in hand, gazing wrathfully at him.

could not help suspecting that something was wrong since seeing the man on the train.

He was about to take up the paddle again to resume rowing when two shots were fired from a clump of bushes on the west bank, and buckshot struck all around him—in the water, the side of the canoe, and in the bushes on the bank behind him.

"There he is!" said Barry, snatching up the paddle and sending the canoe swiftly in that direction. "I'll see if I can't settle him before he can reload!"

Half way across he saw a man making frantic efforts to climb the steep bluff to get shelter behind two big trees growing some fifty feet above the water.

Dropping his paddle he picked up his gun, and fired both barrels in quick succession.

The man uttered a series of yells that awoke the echoes of the mountains.

Quick as a flash Barry put in new cartridges, and was ready to fire again; just as the man reached shelter behind the tree. Having a muzzle-loader, he was more or less exposed in completing his loading operations.

"Come out and show yourself," called Barry, in loud tones.

The man made no response, but continued to reload. In doing so a part of his right hip was exposed, and Barry fired at him again.

The man gave no sign except to leap aside a little bit.

Barry put in a fresh cartridge, and waited for another chance.

In the meantime the canoe drifted with the current till they were both out of range again. Then Barry took up a field-glass, and through it watched the movements of the man.

He recognized the face of the man as that of Bellamy. It did not take him long to find out that he was hurt, for he was seen to pull off his coat, and a very red spot, as large as his two hands was seen on his white shirt just below the right shoulder.

"Hanged if I don't believe I hit him!" said Barry, as he peered at him through the glasses. "I am glad I didn't kill him, though, for I don't want to make any trouble for myself or anybody else. I guess he has got enough, though."

He took one more look at him through the glasses when nearly a half mile away, and saw that he was still in his shirt sleeves doing something that he could not understand.

Then a bend in the river cut off further view, and he put away the glasses and took up the paddle again.

Late in the afternoon he passed Oil City, where a railroad bridge crossed the river. The river bank soon became crowded with young people, who cheered him lustily as he passed on down with the current.

"I want to reach Pittsburg to-morrow some time," he said to himself, "so I won't lose any time by stopping here;" and standing up in the canoe he waved his hat to the youths and maidens who had come down to greet him.

Going down past Oil City he found that a railroad ran along both banks, and wondered if Bellamy was not too much hurt to prevent him following up the canoeist.

But some eight or ten miles below he struck the town of Franklin, where there was another bridge, and one of the roads branched off westward, leaving the line on the left bank.

"I'll keep over to the right when I strike a particularly wild spot," he said, as he saw how the road ran; "but I guess I won't hear anything more from Bellamy. He has enough, I should think."

A few miles below Franklin the sunset found him passing through some of the wildest scenery he had hitherto seen. He saw where logging camps had been, and knew from that sign that he was entering the famous lumbering region of Pennsylvania.

Night came on, and he cooked supper on the oil stove in the bottom of the canoe. He had a good appetite and ate heartily,

after which he lay back and rested as he floated with the current.

After drifting an hour or so, he again took up the paddle and went to work. He knocked off mile after mile with regularity and precision, till near midnight, when he decided that he would roll in his blanket and sleep till morning.

After fixing everything in its place he wrapped himself in his blankets and laid down. In a little while he was soundly sleeping.

His sleep was unbroken till about an hour before day, when he was awakened by feeling a series of bumps, and hearing a rush of water.

He sprang up and tried to take in the situation. It was very dark. He heard men's voices and loud talking, and saw lights moving about—small lanterns.

Then he made the discovery that he had drifted up against an immense raft of logs, and was in imminent danger of being sucked under it by the current.

CHAPTER IX.

BARRY'S ADVENTURES ON THE RAFT.

Springing out of the canoe and landing on the raft, Barry succeeded in pulling it up on the logs, and thus saved it from going under.

"By George! but it was a narrow escape!" he exclaimed. "Another minute, and I would have gone under, and once under, good-by, Sally!"

He stood upon the raft and looked around. The men with the lanterns were evidently trying to move the raft, and set it going downstream again. He could only surmise that much from what he could hear. He could see nothing but the tiny lights bobbing up and down here and there.

"I can't do better than wait here for daylight," Barry remarked to himself. "It can't be more than an hour or so off."

By and by he saw one of the lights approaching him, and in a little while a rough-looking raftsmen came up almost against him, and exclaimed:

"Hello!"

"Hello!" returned Barry. "What's the matter with your raft? I came very near going under it."

"It has got hitched some way," the man said, holding up the lantern so as to see the face of the young canoeist. "Where are you going?"

"To Pittsburg, if I can get by this raft," replied Barry.

"In that 'ere canoe?" the raftsmen asked.

"Yes—I've been in it two days already."

"What's the matter there, Jack?" a voice called.

"Man an' canoe lodged on the raft, sir," replied the raftsmen.

"The deuce! Is he hurt?"

"No, sir."

"All right, then. Tell him to look out for himself."

"Hear that?"

"Yes," said Barry. "I'll take care of myself. Don't worry about me."

The raftsmen went on his rounds inspecting the raft, and Barry was left there in the dark to wait for the coming dawn.

By and by it began to grow lighter, and the young canoeist knew that he would soon be able to see his surroundings.

In the gray dawn three raftsmen came to him and demanded tobacco.

"I have none," he replied. "I don't use it."

"Give us a drink o' suthin', then?" another asked.

"I never drink aynthing but water," he replied.

"Yer don't?"

"No."

"Wal, that beats me! Whar did yer come from, stranger?"

"I came from Olean, up in New York State," he answered.

"Don't you fellows drink water down this way?"

"Not much we don't," was the answer; "leastwise, not if we can get anything else."

"Well, I never drink anything else except tea, coffee or milk."

"An' travel in er canoe?"

"Yes."

"Wal, yer can't live long, mister. Yer're too good. Sorry for yer," and the fellow turned away and left, leaving the other two behind to chaff the newcomer as much as they wanted to.

"I'll bet yer're a runaway from school," said one of the other two.

"All schools have a vacation now," replied Barry. "I belong to Yale College, and am passing my vacation in this way."

"Do yer think it funny?"

"Well, no—can't say I do; but as I've never been on this river before I am very much interested."

"Know how to row a boat, eh?"

"Yes—I think I do."

"Know how to dance?"

"Yes. I know how to dance, too," he replied.

"Nice little boy, I s'pose?"

"Yes—a very nice, quiet, little boy, I am. One of the first things my mother taught me was to never make a fool of myself by asking strangers all sorts of foolish questions."

"Did she ever lick yer?" the raftsmen asked, while his companion laughed at his expense.

"Yes, many a time."

"Yer haven't been licked in er long time, have yer?"

"No."

"I thought so. Ye're sp'ilin' fer one, yer are, an' I'm goin' ter give yer a good un!" And with that he began to spit on his hands and roll up his sleeves.

"Behave yerself, Tom," said the other raftsmen, laughing good-naturedly.

"Lemme erlone, Jack! He intermated I'm er fool, an' I'm goin' ter lick 'im!"

"Did you ever lick anybody?" Barry asked, looking him straight in the eyes.

"Yes, and I've been licked, too."

He was about Barry's size, and probably a couple of years older. But while he was very strong, he had never had the training in athletics that the young canoeist had.

Barry waited for the young raftsmen to attack him, and then like a flash of lightning he struck out and sent him reeling backwards over the logs with a thousand stars flashing before his eyes.

The dumfounded young raftsmen pulled himself together, and got upon his feet again, and blinked his eyes, as if to get rid of the flashing stars, and then put up his guard again.

"Want another like that?" Barry asked.

"Yes; if yer can give it to me."

Barry walked two step forward, made a feint or two, and then gave him a settler between the eyes, and sent him reeling over the logs again.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" exclaimed the other raftsmen, who was taking it all in.

"What jiggered you?" Barry asked.

"The way you laid him out."

"Oh, that's just playing. I can break his neck or jaw by a single blow, but I don't want to hurt the silly fool."

The young raftsmen got up again, but didn't make any more hostile demonstration. He looked at Barry in a puzzled sort of way, and then said:

"Say, mister, I'll give yer a dollar ter show me how yer do it."

Barry laughed, and said:

"If you'll give me that licking you promised a few minutes ago I'll give you a lesson for nothing."

"Can't do it, mister," was the very frank reply.

"Well, try to profit by the lesson I've already given you," said Barry, "and learn to treat strangers courteously hereafter. Fools like you very often get thrashed for their impetence."

Then turning to the other raftsmen, he said:

"Can I walk across to the other end of this raft without falling through?"

"I guess you can, sir," was the reply.

"Well, I'll take my canoe over there, then," and he started to lift it upon his shoulders.

"Let me help you, sir," said the raftsmen.

"If you please."

The two carried the canoe to the lower end of the raft and laid it in the water.

"Thanks, sir," said Barry. "Here's a dollar for you." And he slipped a silver dollar into his hand as he spoke. "I may meet you again some day, and if I do come up and give me your hand, for you'll find me your friend."

"Yes, sir—hope we'll meet again some time," said the raftsmen, extending his hand toward Barry, who took and shook it cordially.

Barry then pulled the canoe around, so as to get it well alongside the logs, and stepped into it.

Seating himself comfortably, he took up the paddle, and was about to shove off when he felt the canoe lifted suddenly out of the water and turned over, precipitating him head foremost into the river.

CHAPTER X.

THE DUCK HUNTERS.

When Barry came to the surface of the water he found that the current was taking him away from the raft at a pretty good rate, and that the canoe was floating away, too, bottom upwards. But he was puzzled to know what had done the mischief. Looking back at the raftsmen on the logs, he asked:

"What was that?"

"A log which had broken loose from under the raft," was the reply. "It came up under the canoe and upset it. There goes the log now."

Barry looked around and saw a big log twenty feet long floating downstream with him and the canoe. But he was satisfied that no trick had been played, and so paid no more attention to the cause of the mishap.

He swam toward the canoe, and began pushing it toward the shore.

"Want any help, mister?" one of the raftsmen asked.

"No, I guess not," he replied.

In a few moments he reached the bank and pulled the canoe up out of the water to find that nothing was missing, as everything had remained in its fastening.

The raftsmen who had assisted him in carrying his canoe across the log raft now came ashore and looked at the canoe.

"Why, you didn't lose a thing!" he exclaimed, in great astonishment.

"No, not a thing," remarked Barry. "I have a secure place for everything, so that nothing would be lost in case of accident."

"Well, I never saw anything like it," said the man. "Even your oil stove is all right."

"Yes; only the wicks got a little wet; that's all the harm that was done, I guess."

He took everything out of the canoe and wiped it dry, and then put them back, after which he remarked:

"Now, I am ready to go on," and he proceeded to shove the canoe back into the water.

"Ain't you going to dry your clothes before you go?" the raftsmen asked.

"No. The sun will soon be up high enough to dry them."

He got into the canoe, took up the paddle, and was soon off, going down the river at a rate of speed that astonished the men on the raft.

In a little while he was out of sight of the raft. A short time after the sun began to peep over the tree tops.

Then he set the oil stove in position to use, but had some trouble at first to get it to work, on account of the wet wicks.

But he finally got it going all right, and then proceeded to make some coffee and boil some eggs.

When he had eaten his breakfast he felt better. The hot coffee warmed him up.

"I'll make Pittsburg some time this evening, I guess," he remarked, as he put the oil stove back in its place and secured it there. "It's a good ways off yet," and he took up the paddle and began to work with a will. It was necessary for him to do so, in order to prevent cold, or something worse, resulting from wearing his clothes wet.

By and by the sun was up high enough to draw steam from his clothes. But he worked the paddles for twenty miles or more ere he stopped for a breathing spell.

Turning a bend of the river he came in sight of a batteau with three men in it. They were all armed with double-barreled shotguns.

When he came up with them one of the men sang out:

"Hello! Going downstream?"

"Yes—for Pittsburg."

"The deuce you are!"

"Yes."

"Well, can't you wait for an hour or so? There's a big covey of ducks down below that bend there, and we are going to float down on them."

"Yes," he said, "I wouldn't mind taking a shot at them myself," and he took his breech-loader from its place. "I've got just the thing here for ducks, only I'm loaded with buckshot."

"Buckshot?"

"Yes; I've seen some large game since I started on this trip—deer, bear and bloodhounds."

"Did you kill any large game?"

"Yes. I killed a bear and two bloodhounds."

"Killed a bear, eh?"

"Yes; here's a paw I cut off," and he produced the trophy, much to their surprise.

"How came you to shoot the dogs?" one of the men asked.

"Because they chased me for ten miles, and I couldn't shake them off."

"Why didn't you shoot the deer?"

"They got away while I was changing the cartridges."

Then he told the story of the experience he had with duck shooting, at which the party laughed heartily.

He soon found out that they were city chaps out for a vacation, and were stopping at a little village hotel a mile or so back from the river.

During the conversation the canoe and batteau drifted slowly down the river and reached the bend, beyond which the flock of ducks was supposed to be.

But when they came in sight of the game, they were too far away to reach with their guns.

"Keep still," whispered Barry, "and we may get a shot yet. The breeze is from them, and if you keep quiet they may not take the alarm."

They did keep quiet, and the batteau and canoe floated noiselessly down to within good range of the game.

"Now let 'em have it!" cried Barry, and all four young men fired into the flock. As the ducks rose on the wing, several more were brought down.

"That's the way to do it," said Barry. "I'll gather them up for you," and he sent the canoe onward like a thing of light and airy life among the dead and wounded ducks.

He soon gathered them all and threw them into the batteau.

"Won't you have your share of them?" one of the young men asked.

"No—you may have my share," he replied. "I have no time to cook ducks. Too much trouble. Besides, I want to reach Pittsburg this evening."

"You can't do it," said one of the young men, shaking his head.

"I guess I can."

"I guess you can't. Why, man, it's nearly one hundred miles to Pittsburg by way of the river."

"Well, I have a three mile current in my favor, you know, and I can knock off a few miles with my paddle, and not feel any the worse for it."

"I say!" called one of the young men

"Well—what do you say?"

"Let me go with you?"

"To Pittsburg?"

"Yes."

"Oh, that wouldn't do," said Barry. "It would be charged that I had help in making the trip. I have let no one get into the canoe but myself since I started. You see why I could not afford it, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, when I reach Pittsburg I may rest there a day or two, and then take a trip down the Ohio. If you meet me at Pittsburg you can go with me below there."

"I don't think my vacation would allow me so much time as that," said the young man; "but I will see if I can meet you there."

Barry then bade them good-by, and started off down the river, the young men watching him as far as they could see him. Just as he was rounding a bend they fired a volley as a parting salute, which he returned by raising his hat on the end of his paddle. A little later he had passed out of sight, and was once more going it alone.

But he did not go very far ere he came up with another raft of logs going down to Pittsburg. It was a big raft—not too broad, but very long.

"What craft is that?" one of the raftsmen sang out to him.

"The Pittsburg dispatch," he replied.

"Goin' ter Pittsburg?"

"Yes."

"Got any tobacco?"

"No—don't use it."

"Anything ter drink?"

"Yes, plenty of it."

"Gimme a pull at it?"

"Yes, of course."

"Well, run in hycr," said the man.

He turned the canoe toward the raft, and was soon alongside of it.

Four men laid down their long poles, with which they guided the raft, and rushed over to the canoe.

"Tip-top canoe yer've got thar, mister," said one of the raftsmen, looking over the contents of the canoe as Barry began to take his tin cup from its fastening.

"Yes—I had it made to order," he replied, dipping a cupful of river water and passing it up toward one of the men.

"Water—something to drink," he replied.

A blank look came into the faces of the four men, and they quickly exchanged glances with each other.

Barry saw that they did not appreciate the joke, and was

about to push off from the raft, when two of them stooped over and seized it—one at each end. They lifted it out of the water about three feet, and then turned it bottom upwards, spilling him head foremost into the river.

CHAPTER XI.

THE OLD SAVAGE.

The thing was done so quickly, and without a word being uttered, that Barry was in the water ere he divined their intentions. Fortunately for him the current was not running under the raft, but rather with it, or he would inevitably have been drowned.

Ere he came to the surface again, the raftsmen tossed the canoe into the water, bottom upwards, and so he found it when he came up.

The first thing he heard when he reappeared was the hoarse laughter of the rough river men. They roared with merriment as he swam to the canoe and began pushing it toward the shore.

"Climb on the bottom of it!" sung out one of them.

"Get in underneath!" cried another.

"Turn it over and get in!" yelled a third.

"Take it on yer back an swim!" called out a fourth.

Barry made no reply to their taunts, for just then he was too mad to trust himself to say anything. He saw that as a practical joker he was not a success, save in the matter of furnishing the victim.

But they continued to yell at and taunt him till he reached the shore, where they saw him pull the canoe out of the water, and turn it right side up again.

The first thing he did was to unfasten his gun and take it out.

The raftsmen were dumfounded, for they thought, quite naturally, that the entire contents of the canoe had gone to the bottom of the river.

"I say!" called Barry. "It is my turn now! Jump into the water, or I'll give you a shower of buckshot."

The raftsmen were paralyzed.

They glared at him in mortal terror for a minute or so, and then one of them sang out:

"Don't shoot!"

"Jump, I tell you!" ordered Barry, leveling the gun at them.

"One, two——"

Splash! Splash! Splash! Splash!

Four men sprang into the water, and began swimming to keep themselves afloat.

"Now laugh, blast you!"

They all four laughed.

But there was nothing savoring of fun in their laughter—no merriment, in fact.

"That's all right," said Barry; "and now it's my turn to laugh."

And he did laugh.

He roared.

The four raftsmen climbed back upon the logs, and mentally wished the boy canoeist at the bottom of the river, while Barry continued to laugh as if he thought it the best joke he had ever heard of.

The raft floated slowly down the river, and Barry turned to the task of wiping his gun and other things dry.

But he soon got things fixed, and then started on his voyage again. It did not take him many minutes to catch up with the raft. The men on it looked at him in a way that showed a great deal of respect.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, in a good-natured way. "What craft is that?"

"It's a raft," was the reply.

"Got any tobacco?"

No answer.

"Got anything to drink?"

"Yes, plenty of it," replied one of the raftsmen.

"Help yourself, then—drink all you want. It won't hurt you, I guess," and Barry laughed heartily, as he went skimming by the big raft.

"I guess I am about even with them," he said to himself, as he left them behind him. "But I don't think I'll attempt to jest with any more raftsmen. They don't seem to think a joke is quite finished till they have turned it back over on the joker. Anybody would say that I deserved what I got for attempting to joke with strangers, and I don't know but what it was quite foolish to do so. But I guess I got even with 'em, anyhow. Hang it, this is the second time I've been in the water to-day. It's a wonder I'm not made ill by it. But I'll do two hours hard rowing in the hot sunshine, and maybe that will prevent me from taking cold from it."

He rowed hard for more than two hours, passing a good-sized village during the time, where over one hundred young people had assembled to greet him and cheer him on.

He waved his cap at them, but did not stop to speak to any one, much to the regret of quite a number of school girls and young ladies in the party.

"Hang it!" he said, as he glanced at the many pretty girls on the river bank. "If I weren't wet through and through I'd stop and get acquainted with some of them."

He soon passed them, and was once more passing through some wild, beautiful scenery, for which the river in that locality is famous. In some places the bold bluffs were two hundred feet above the water, covered with thick growths, whose green foliage made the landscape beautiful beyond description.

In one of the wildest spots he had seen on the trip he was hailed by an old man, who stood at the water's edge at the foot of a steep bluff with a flintlock squirrel rifle in his hand.

"Say, thar!" called the old man.

"Hello!" responded Barry.

"Take me over t'other side."

"I am not a ferryman," replied Barry. "I am on my way to Pittsburg, and have no time to lose."

The old man raised his rifle half way to his shoulder, and said:

"Come right hyer, young man, or I'll make a hole in yer!"

Barry looked at him in amazement, and for a minute or two thought of Sid Bellamy, and wondered if the old man was not him in disguise.

"Do you mean to say you'll shoot me if I don't row you over the river?" Barry asked the old man.

"Yes; an' that purty quick, too, youngster," replied the old man.

"Well, I'll put you over, then," said Barry, "for I don't want any hole shot in my anatomy," and he turned the canoe toward him.

When he reached the foot of the bluff he found the old man to be a very desperate-looking character, whose face had the impress of crime stamped upon it in very plain lines.

"Where do you want to go, sir?" he asked, as the canoe struck the bank.

"I want ter go across t'other side," he replied, as he stepped into the canoe.

"Look out! You'll turn us over!" cried Barry, as the old man stepped in. The old fellow tried to regain his balance, but in the effort to do so he went overboard with a splash, taking his rifle with him.

He came very near taking Barry with him, too; but the boy

had the presence of mind to paddle back out of the way of the old man, for fear he would catch hold of the canoe and try to climb in. That would be sure to upset it.

The old man came to the surface, and spurted a mouthful of water toward the shore, and said:

"Blast yer picter! What'd yer do that for?"

"I didn't do it," said Barry. "'Twas your own awkwardness."

"Curses on yer canoe!" hissed the old man. "I've lost my rifle."

"I can't help that, I'm sure. Swim to the bank. You can't climb into the canoe from the water. You'd turn it over and spill me out."

"Blast yer! I'll spill yer if I kin get hold of yer!"

Barry very promptly moved out of his way on hearing that, saying:

"I guess you had better go ashore. I have no time to fool with you," and with that Barry moved still further away from him.

"Say, thar! Take me over and I'll pay yer."

"I am no ferryman," said Barry again. "You had better go back and dive for your gun."

He suspected that the water was very deep on that side of the river at the foot of the bluff, and hence did not fear being shot by the old man.

Seeing that the young canoeist was not going to take him into the canoe, the old man turned toward the bank again, heaping fearful maledictions on his head. Even after climbing up on a portion of the steep bank he continued to berate Barry in a way the latter had never heard before.

"What's the matter with you?" Barry asked. "You talk like a lunatic. What asylum did you escape from?"

The old man seized a stone the size of a cocoanut and hurled it at the canoe. It fell about twenty feet short of the mark.

Barry laughed, and pulled further out into the stream, leaving him seated at the foot of the bluff.

CHAPTER XII.

THE LAST PULL FOR PITTSBURG.

The last Barry saw of the venomous old man, he was still seated at the water's edge, shaking his fist at him.

"He is the worst I've met yet," he said, as he vigorously used the paddle. "He is savage-looking, and I shall always believe that he would have shot me had I refused to take him across while he had a gun in his hands. I wonder if he is an old outlaw? He looked as if he lived in the woods altogether. I don't want to meet with any more men like him."

In a little while he was out of sight of the old man, but it took him some time to get over the nervousness caused by the threat to shoot him.

An hour later he saw a steamboat coming up the river. It was one of the regular river steamers, and carried freight and passengers.

"I'll have to look out for waves made by that wheel," he said. "It wouldn't take much of a wave to swamp me. I don't want another ducking to-day. Twice in one day is enough."

He drew off to the left as far as he could, and stopped to let the steamboat go by. The passengers did not see him, or, if they did, they never suspected who he was, or did not have any knowledge of the feat he was performing.

The waves cast up by the steamer tossed him pretty lively, but didn't do any damage, and in a minute or two it was all over, and he resumed his journey.

Two hours later he came in sight of another village, and found quite a number of young people looking for his appearance.

His clothes were thoroughly dry now, and as they gave him a cheer he decided to run up to the bank and find out how much further he had to go to reach Pittsburg.

He struck the banks of the river at the feet of a bevy of beautiful girls.

"Good afternoon, ladies," he greeted, raising his hat and bowing to them with grace and good humor.

They returned his greeting with a cordiality that was pleasing in the extreme.

"Can any of you ladies tell me how far it is to Pittsburg by way of the river?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," replied a pretty, blue-eyed miss. "It is thirty-six miles, and we are sorry you have to row so far."

"Thanks a thousand times," he replied. "It won't take long to make that distance."

"Aren't you awfully tired?" the blue-eyed girl asked.

"Oh, no—not so much as one would suppose."

"It's awfully lonesome though, isn't it?" she asked.

"Yes, at times. Yet I have had some queer adventures since I started."

He talked with them about ten minutes, and then said he would start again, as he wanted to make the trip before dark.

They gave him a splendid send-off, and he went down the river at a rate of speed that astonished some of the young men in the party who prided themselves on what they knew about rowing.

"Thirty-six miles yet to go," he said, as he paddled right and left. "I ought to make that in four hours or less, and will be disappointed if I don't."

He was now in the region of magnificent scenery, and the midsummer foliage made it all the more beautiful and attractive. But the river was not without animated life, for rafts and boats were seen at intervals, and lumber camps and coal wharves came into view here and there.

"Ah! Pittsburg is not far off," he said. "One can tell that from the bustle along the river. I wish I had time to stop and fish and hunt along this part of the river. I could spend a month fishing and hunting about here. But these rough lumbermen seem to have a prejudice against city chaps, and never let an opportunity pass to chaff them in some way."

"Hello, thar!" called a voice from the bank on the left.

"Hello, yourself!" returned Barry, looking in vain for the man who had hailed him.

"I want ter git over t'other side," said the unknown.

"Well, can't you swim?"

"Yes; but I don't want to wet my clothes."

"Pull 'em off, then."

"Darn yer, can't yer row a feller over!"

"No. This canoe won't run any way but downstream, and I have to keep using the paddle to keep up with it. If I stop I'll get left."

"Gosh, what er liar yer be!" said the unknown, and Barry laughed as he passed down out of hearing of his voice.

"Strange how many people are along this river who have no boats," remarked Barry. "That's about the tenth man I've met who wanted me to row him over. I wonder who the young fellow was the bloodhounds were after? I can't believe that he was a criminal. He didn't look like one, anyway."

When within about twenty miles of Pittsburg he passed a village where a number of people were on the lookout for him.

"Here's a dispatch for you!" cried a man, waving a piece of paper above his head.

He turned quickly to the river bank and received an envelope from a man there.

He tore it open, and read:

"The Yale crew has wagered that you will reach Pittsburg before sunset. Do your best."

It was signed by one of his chums.

"How far to the city?" he asked of those on shore.

"Twenty miles," a dozen replied.

"Well, I am going to get there before sunset, or spoil this canoe."

"You can't do it, mister," said a man in the crowd.

"I guess I can, if the river is open all the way."

"It's open enough," was the reply, "but you can't go twenty miles in one and one-half hours. That's what's the matter."

"Don't worry about that. I'll get there in less than that time."

He pulled out, and laid himself down for the best work he had done on the trip, and the way he sent the canoe skimming through the water was a wonder to the spectators.

"Now for it!" he exclaimed, bending to his work with a will. He never pulled so hard in his life, as he saw that every stroke counted.

Mile after mile was passed, and as he passed raft after raft the men hailed him, and wanted to know why he was in such a hurry.

He made no reply to anybody, but bent himself to his task, and vowed to make his chums winners if his muscles could do it.

Several times it looked as though men were trying to stop him, for they hailed him with all sorts of excuses, but he turned a deaf ear to all.

Never did people along that river see a canoe make such fast time through the water. It seemed at times as if the canoe barely touched the water.

The sun sank down behind the hills which towered above the water, but he knew that it had not set according to the standard of the almanac.

By and by he began to see the smoke that hung like a cloud above the iron city. Houses dotted the river banks here and there, showing that he was approaching the suburbs.

At last he came in sight of a small steamboat from which rose the pennant of the Yale crew.

Then he heard the yell of the Yale boys, and could not refrain from returning it with all his force of lungs.

Splash! splash! went his paddle as the canoe dashed out to meet the steamboat which was out in the middle of the river waiting for him.

A number of the crew had their watches in their hands, so eager were they to know just the time he crossed the city line.

When within 200 yards of the steamboat he saw a man in a round-bottom boat coming up the river as if he took no interest in the canoe at all. Barry took but little interest in him. But when they were nearly opposite each other the stranger turned squarely across his bow, and in another moment the collision took place, and Barry was capsized and sent toward the bottom again.

CHAPTER XIII.

BARRY MAKES ANOTHER START.

The collision was so sudden that Barry had no time to prevent a capsize.

He went down out of sight, and yells of rage came from the Yale crew on the little steamboat further down the river.

Barry was up in a moment or two right under the bow of the other boat.

He clutched it with his hand, and by a dexterous movement threw, or rather pulled, himself into it.

Seizing an oar, he struck at the man with all his might.

The man yelled:

"Hello! Hold up!"

Whack!

The second blow struck home, and the fellow in a rage rose to his feet and sought to clinch with the young canoeist.

That was just what Barry wanted. He sparred just a moment or two with him, and then gave him one that sent him overboard.

Then he seized an oar and rowed to his upturned canoe, which he lifted out of the water and put it in proper position again, after which he got in, seized the other paddle, which was fastened in its place, and began rowing.

The Yale boys yelled themselves hoarse with joy as they saw him making for the steamer with ten minutes to spare.

"Yale!" they yelled. "Y-a-l-e—Yale!" and a dozen hands were extended to pull him up into the steamboat as he came alongside of it.

They pulled him on board, and made the welkin ring with their shouts, and gave no end of groans for the man who had intercepted him for the purpose of causing him a delay long enough to make the Yale boys losers.

Each member of the Yale crew wrung his hand and yelled at the top of his voice.

The canoe was drawn upon board the little steamer, after which they sailed, or rather steamed down the river to the landing, some two miles below.

There they landed and escorted him to a hotel, where they met Couch, the New York merchant.

"Well, you beat my record, Walton," Couch said, shaking hands with him.

"Of course I did," he replied. "I would have drowned myself if I did not."

"Well, you must remember you had a better canoe than I did."

"Yes, so I did. But then you lived in the days of small things. They didn't know as much as we do to start with."

"I won't say yes to that," and Couch shook his head. "They know how to make better boats now, of course."

"And we know better how to row, too, I guess," said Barry. "It took you ten days to come through and me three and one-third days. Quite sufficient to settle the question, I should think."

"My dear boy," said Mr. Couch, slapping him familiarly on the shoulder, "I am not going to quarrel with you on that point. Yale has her crew nowadays. When I was there she did not. We are both Yale men, and we'll dine together—the whole crew—this evening at my expense."

At that the Yale boys yelled, and lifting the young canoeist on their shoulders marched round the block with him.

Back in the hotel, the boys gave him time to procure some new clothes, and after he had made the necessary change they sat down to the banquet the New York merchant had ordered.

It was a jolly dinner.

Couch presided, and Barry sat on his right, brown as a berry, and happy as the traditional clam at high tide.

In a neat little speech Barry related some of his adventures on the way down the river. His slaughter of the ducks made the boys roar, as did the relation of his practical joke on the raftsmen when he asked for something to drink.

They sat two hours at the table, and laughed and sang college songs and told stories of college life.

When they left the table they found a large number of sporting men in the hotel, who had bet various sums of money on the voyage, and they had assembled to find out the exact time he struck the steamer.

Couch soon settled that point, and thousands of dollars changed hands.

Then the canoe was brought in and turned bottom upwards to be examined. Everybody was amazed at the evidence of rough usage the canoe had received.

"But for the rawhide used in the inside I would have gone to

the bottom," said Barry, by way of explanation. "The river is low, at present, and the rocks stick up in many places. It was the roughest trip I ever made in my life, and hope never to make another like it. I was shot at and chased by bloodhounds, as well as bumped about on the rocks."

It was a jolly reception he met with, and it was long after midnight ere he retired to bed. It was the first bed he had slept in since he left Olean, and he slept till after sunrise the next morning.

At breakfast that morning he informed the boys of the Yale crew that he was going to continue the voyage to the mouth of the Ohio River.

"The deuce!" one of them exclaimed. "We came to take you back to New Haven and have a blow-out."

"Better wait till I have made 1,000 miles in the canoe," said Barry. "Then we'll have a record to blow about. I've only made 285 miles as yet."

"But you can't make 700 miles in that canoe, man! It's used up almost."

"I'll have some repairing done on the bottom," he said, "and then start again. A good boat-builder can make the repairs in a few hours. I'm going to make a record with it, and then keep it all my life. Hang it, man, I may keep on to the Gulf! Just think of it! From Olean, New York, to the Gulf of Mexico in a canoe! How's that for a record?"

"Don't make a fool of yourself, Barry," said his friend.

"I've got good material for one," and Barry shook his head in a very determined way as he spoke. "The same foolishness which brought me through so far can take me right down into the Gulf, and don't you forget it."

The crew yelled their applause, and Barry would not say that he did not intend to go through to the mouth of the Mississippi.

"If you don't think I can do it," he said, "just say so, and I'll prove it by doing the thing."

"Of course we know that you can go anywhere, as long as you can find water to float you," his friend said; "but what's the use of doing so? One thousand miles will be record enough."

During the day he succeeded in finding a boat builder, who undertook to repair the damages to the bottom of the canoe. While the work was being done he went among the stores and purchased some few articles which experience told him he would need.

The Yale crew remained to give him a send-off, and it soon became manifest that the entire sporting element of Pittsburg intended to take a hand in it.

One of the morning papers gave notice of the time he would start, and where from.

The time was to be at high noon, when all the factories and workshops would be emptied for the dinner hour.

At 11:30 o'clock, headed by a brass band, the Yale crew left the hotel, bearing the canoe on their shoulders. Barry followed immediately behind them, clad in his rowing costume, which he had procured for the voyage.

The workingmen crowded the streets all the way down to the river to cheer him. They made the welkin ring with their shouts of encouragement.

One brawny iron worker, with his face and hands blackened by the soot and smoke of the forge, rushed into the middle of the street, extended his hand to Barry, and said:

"Gimme your hand, lad. I wish I could go with you."

Barry smiled, and shook hands with the brawny son of toil.

Down at the river he saw an immense crowd of people on both banks to see him off. Men, women and children were everywhere cheering, waving handkerchiefs, and making all the noise they could.

The canoe was placed in the water, and Mr. Couch, the New York merchant, took Barry's hand to bid him good-by.

"Now, my boy," he said to the young canoeist, "if you should need any money before you return, just step into any bank and draw on me for it. I am a Yale boy myself, you know."

"Thanks, sir," returned Barry. "I hope I won't need any more than I have with me."

"Yes, that's all right, but you don't know what may happen. You may get robbed of every penny, you know."

Then Barry shook hands with the Yale boys and stepped into the canoe. A little girl stepped forward and presented him with a beautiful silk flag.

"Ah! Thank you, my little lady," he said. "I'll put it in position at once." And he fastened it to the bow of the canoe, where it waved in the gentle breeze that was blowing at the time.

Precisely at noon half a hundred steam whistles blew all over the city, and Barry splashed his paddle in the water and was off like a flash.

A wild cheer greeted him from both banks of the river, but he looked neither to the right or left. He had all he could do to pass through the fleet of various kinds of craft on the river, which had assembled there to see him off.

On the right bank Alleghany City turned out its thousands to see him and his canoe, and many young men had closely observed the latter, in order to have similar ones made for themselves.

It did not take him long to get away from the din and smoke of the city. He left it behind, and before him lay the majestic Ohio.

The river was much larger now, as the waters of the Monongahela had joined those of the Alleghany, making a river large enough for steamboat navigation at all seasons of the year.

He had no more fears of rapids, but would have to be on the lookout for steamboats, hence to sleep and float with the current at the same time would be extremely dangerous.

The scenery below Pittsburg was as grand and picturesque as any he had seen on the Alleghany River, and he enjoyed it fully as much.

It was during the later hours of the afternoon that an incident occurred that was not only very singular, but came very near inflicting more damage than anything that had hitherto happened to him.

He was going leisurely along making regular strokes with his paddle, when a large sturgeon, fully four feet in length, leaped out of the water and fell squarely across the canoe.

Barry started, for it gave him quite a surprise. He glared at the big fish and saw that it was a sturgeon. He was about to strike it with the paddle when it gave another jump, and landed lengthwise in the bottom of the canoe.

"Caught himself, as I'm a sinner!" exclaimed Barry.

But the sturgeon evidently did not like his quarters, for he began to rattle things most vigorously. He struck right and left with head and tail, and had the contents of the canoe not been secured in their places to prevent being lost in case of accident, they would have been knocked into the river. As it was, they were battered and bruised, and the canoe was rattled in a way that caused Barry to exclaim:

"By George! I believe he's trying to swamp me."

He continued to struggle to free himself, and gave such hard blows that Barry finally had to draw his knife and give him several stabs to quiet him.

By that means he succeeded in killing the big fish.

"That's the biggest fish I ever caught in all my life," he said, as he looked at the sturgeon. "He must be one of the original settlers, and weighs nearly as much as I do."

He kept on rowing, intending to throw the dead fish overboard when he stopped. But an hour later he heard a child's voice on the right bank cry out:

"Oh, mamma, look at that man in a boat!"

He looked in that direction, and saw a woman seated on the river bank fishing, with a little ten-year-old girl by her side.

"What luck?" he asked.

"I've caught one little fish," the woman replied.

"I've got a big one in the canoe here which you can have if you will take it."

"Thank you, sir. I'd be glad enough to take it," she replied.

He rowed up to the river bank, and saw from her dress that she was in very poor circumstances, yet she was good-looking, not over thirty years of age, and little above the medium height.

"Oh, mamma!" cried the little girl on seeing the fish, "what a big fish."

"What kind of a fish is it, sir?" the mother of the little girl asked.

"It is a sturgeon, ma'am," replied Barry. "One of the very best in the river, I believe."

"Are they suited for the table?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am; one of the best for that purpose."

And he proceeded to lift it out of the canoe and lay it on the ground near where she was seated.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PICNIC ON THE RIVER BANK.

The woman looked at the big fish in dismay.

"Oh, dear!" she exclaimed. "I shall never be able to get it home in the world."

"How far do you live from here?" he asked.

"About a quarter of a mile."

Barry shook his head.

"I am sorry I cannot carry it up to the house for you, ma'am. Perhaps your husband could come for it if I should hang it up where he could find it?"

"I have no husband—I am a widow," she replied, a tinge of sadness in her tones.

"Have you no men folks who could take it up for you?"

"No, sir. My little girl and I live all alone."

"Have you no neighbor near by?"

"The nearest neighbor lives at least a half mile away, sir."

"You must find it very lonesome living that way, ma'am," he remarked.

"I do, indeed, sir. My husband died two years ago, leaving me a little cottage and a few acres and this little girl, but not a cent of money. Having no parents living, I have had no other way to live except to stay in my home, which is all paid for."

"Mamma—mamma," said the little girl, softly, "we will have plenty to eat now, won't we?"

"Yes, daughter—hush!" replied the mother.

"Madam," said Barry, "I am a Yale college student taking a canoe voyage during my vacation, hence my time is my own. I judge from the little girl's remark that it is hard times with you now. Permit me to cook a dinner for all three of us right here, after which I'll take the sturgeon up to the house for you."

The mother looked confused for a moment or two, and then replied:

"I cannot refuse your generous offer, sir. You may do as you wish. I am a graduate of college myself, and married much against my parents' wishes."

Barry sprang out of the canoe and dragged it up on the bank, and went to work to set the oil stove going.

He put on a little kettle of water, and while waiting for it to boil proceeded to cut several large slices from the sturgeon, which he salted and peppered preparatory to frying.

"Oh, mamma!" cried the little girl, "just look at the little stove!"

"Do you prefer tea or coffee, ma'am?" Barry asked. "I have both."

"Coffee, if you please," she replied.

He proceeded to make the little pot of coffee, and then got out the frying pan.

"Why, mamma!" cried the little girl, "he can go to house-keeping right out here in the woods."

"Hush, Nellie," said the mother gently. "Don't talk so much."

"Dear madam, let her talk as much as she pleases. She enjoys this thing as much as either of us," and he proceeded to take out a little tin case from under the bow of the canoe and unlock it.

Inside of it were a little set of China plates, neat little cups and saucers, and a half dozen napkins, and knives and forks.

"You see I have come prepared to have a picnic on short notice, ma'am."

"Yes," she replied. "You must enjoy your vacation very much."

"Indeed I do; but I assure you that nothing has given me so much real enjoyment as this meeting and the dinner we are going to have."

"Thanks. I shall not forget it soon myself, for it's a break in the dull monotony of my life which is quite unexpected," I assure you."

During the time the fish was frying Barry learned that the woman's name was Sillman—Mrs. Sadie Sillman—and also the name of her post-office.

When the fish was well done he placed a large slice on a plate and gave it to the little girl, together with a knife and fork and a cup of coffee.

"Now, my little lady," he said, "eat just as much as you wish. Fish never hurts any one."

Then he helped the mother to a similar slice, with bread and coffee, after which he fixed a meal for himself.

"This is a family picnic," he said, laughing. "I am the chief cook and bottle-washer."

Mrs. Sillman laughed, and remarked:

"Say rather that you are the host, and that my daughter and I are your guests."

"Yes—as you like. But, tell me, am I a good cook?"

"Yes, indeed. I never drank better coffee in my life, and this fish is done brown to perfection. How in the world did you learn how to cook?"

"I hardly know. I suppose I picked it up as the chickens get their living."

They ate heartily, and then the mother said:

"I'll wash up the dishes for you."

"Thanks. I'll take the big fish up to the house for you if little Nellie here will run along with me to show the way. If you cut it up in strips an inch thick, salt and smoke it, you can save the whole of it."

"Ah! I was wondering if I could do that."

"Yes, I have seen smoked sturgeon, and like it, too."

He took the fish on his shoulder and started up the hill with it, preceded by little Nellie, leaving the mother washing up the dishes.

When he arrived at the house he found it to be a very neat little cottage, with about twenty acres of land around it. The house was furnished very much like other farmhouses—everything clean and neat, and well kept.

Nellie showed him where to hang the fish in the kitchen, and then they returned, after getting a drink of water from the well.

On returning to the river bank they found that Mrs. Sillman had washed up the dishes and laid them on the grass, ready for him to place back in the tin case.

He placed everything back in the case, and remarked:

"I shall have to leave you now, and before I go permit me to say that I have spent here the most pleasant hour of my voyage down the river. I thank you and your little girl for the pleasure."

"Mr. Walton," said the mother, her voice faltering as she spoke, "I shall never forget your kindness. The truth is we had nothing to eat to-day, so I came to the river to catch some fish. Your gift of that fish will relieve us for a fortnight or more."

"Ah, you can't live always this way, ma'am," said Barry. "Why not sell your place and move into some town where your child can go to school, and you can find something to do?"

"I have tried to do that, but I can't find a purchaser. I would sell the place cheap. If you can find a purchaser when you return home I would allow you a good commission."

"I would not take any commission, ma'am. I'll see if I can find a purchaser when I get back to New York. Now, good-by, Nellie," and he extended his hand toward the little girl.

Nellie shook hands with him, and said:

"Come and see us again."

"Ah, you bet I will if I ever get this near the house again," he replied, shaking her little brown hand.

He then bade Mrs. Sillman good-by and sprang into the canoe.

CHAPTER XV.

THE GOOD DEED—THE LUNATIC.

On the way down the river Barry began to reflect on the ups and downs of life, and remarked:

"That's one of the usual incidents of life. There's a deep romance back of that woman's life. She was a college graduate, fell in love with a poor man and married him. He died and left her with an humble home and a sweet little girl child, but no income. It has been like a dream to her, and now she has settled down to the almost hopeless life of a widow out in the wilds of western Pennsylvania. What a pity! What a pity!"

Five miles farther down the river he struck a good-sized village. Nobody seemed to have been aware of his coming, as there was no one on the river bank to see him go by.

"I'm going to stop here for a few minutes," he said, "and attend to a little business."

He reached the river bank, and called a small boy to him.

"Boy, I'll give you a quarter if you'll stay here and watch my canoe for me," he said.

"Yes, sir; I'll watch it."

"Very well. Don't let anyone get into it. I'll be back inside of half an hour," and with that he walked off up into the town.

He soon came to a grocery store which seemed to carry a good deal of stock. Going inside, he asked the proprietor:

"Do you sell groceries to people in the country?"

"Well, we sell to whoever will buy," he replied.

"Of course. I understand that. What I meant was whether you were in the habit of sending goods to purchasers out in the country?"

"Oh, yes. My wagon goes as far as seven or eight miles in the country almost every day."

"Do you know a Widow Sillman who lives four or five miles up the river?"

"Mrs. Sadie Sillman? Yes, I know her well. Her husband used to buy goods of me. He has been dead some two years now."

"Yes, she is an acquaintance of mine. I want you to send out to her a barrel of your best flour, fifty pounds of sugar,

one hundred pounds of meal, some tea and coffee. Make out the bill and I'll pay you the money."

The grocer made haste to do as ordered, and in a few minutes Barry paid for the goods and left.

On returning to the canoe, he found half a dozen small boys there inspecting it, though none of them dared touch it.

He paid the boy his promised quarter for watching it, and then resumed his journey.

"The widow will be a happy woman when she gets those groceries," he said to himself, as he resumed his trip. "It will be a God-send to her and her little girl. What a sad fate for a college-bred girl!"

He passed the village and was soon out in the country, and a wild country it was.

"They may talk about the Rhine, the Hudson and Cumberland rivers," he said, "but I don't think the scenery on the upper Ohio and the Alleghanies can be beaten by any of them. Hello! There's another canoe, as I live—the first one I've seen since I started."

The canoe was a regular one on the Indian style, made of birch bark, and seemed to have been in use a long time. And the man in it was a queer-looking chap, too.

He had the buckskin dress of the border hunters, and wore a coon-skin cap. His hair was long and unkempt.

"Hello!" called Barry.

"Hello, thar!" and the man dropped his paddle and picked up his rifle. "Be yer friendly?"

"Yes, of course I am. What's the matter with you?"

"Thar ain't nawthin' the matter with me. But thar's so many dangerous renegades an' redskins about that one has got ter be spry ter keep his scalp."

"Redskins!"

"Yes, ther woods are full of 'em, stranger."

"Why, I didn't know that!" exclaimed Barry.

"Wal, yer will know it if yer go far. Why, I killed four yesterday, ther tarnal skunks."

"The deuce you did!" and Barry wondered what sort of a character he was.

He ran his canoe up pretty close to the birch bark, and saw that the man was as crazy as a loon, and he judged that his hobby was Indians.

He resolved to humor him, and so remarked:

"That reminds me that I did see some redskins dodging about in the woods back there a bit."

"Yes, yer have ter look out for 'em."

"I say," said Barry. "I see two about a half mile down the river now. Just wait here, and I'll bring in their scalps."

"All right—better be spry."

Barry dashed off down the river as fast as he could, but when he was some 500 yards away the lunatic uttered a whoop and started in pursuit.

CHAPTER XVI.

CAPTURED BY MOONSHINERS.

At first it was a puzzle to the young canoeist to know what the old crank in the birch bark canoe was after. He saw him coming down the stream as fast as his paddle could bring him, and every look and motion had a hostile tinge to it.

"I wonder if he has seen through my ruse to get rid of him?" Barry asked himself. "I could knock him out of the canoe with a charge of buckshot, but I don't want to hurt the old fellow. He may be a harmless old crank for all I know, but he has a rifle, and may take a notion to shoot. I'll see if I can't outrow him."

Barry took a firm hold on his double paddle, and laid to

with all his might, and the canoe went flying through the water at a rate of speed that would have been astonishing to one on the river banks.

But the old crank was a good rower, too, and his bark was fully as light as Barry's. But he did not have a double paddle, and that is where Barry had the advantage over him.

On seeing the boy canoeist seeking to escape him, the old crank gave a series of yells that awoke the sleeping echoes of the hills. Barry bent to his work without looking back to see what effect his rowing was having till he heard the old man's rifle crack.

Then he looked back and saw a little puff of whitish-gray smoke floating away above the birch-bark canoe.

"Why, he's shooting at me!" he exclaimed. "It's lucky I'm out of range. I wonder that he is allowed to run loose on the river."

Barry bent to the oar steadily, and soon made the discovery that he was widening the distance between them.

"He'll have to do some very tall rowing to overtake me," he said, "though he can get through the water very fast in that bit of bark."

Half an hour later the old crank gave a fierce yell of rage and laid down his paddle. He had given up the pursuit as a hopeless one, and Barry continued on his way, determined to place many a mile behind him ere he stopped rowing.

"Well, that's an experience I did not expect to encounter when I started on this trip. Who would have believed that I would be chased and fired at on the Ohio by an old crank in a birch bark canoe? Verily, there are strange things seen as one travels around the world. Had I been in range of his rifle the old fellow would have perforated me, no doubt. Why don't the authorities arrest him and lock him up as a dangerous character, I wonder? Here comes a steamboat. I'll have to go in shore till it passes, as I don't want any water slashing into the canoe."

He ran into the right bank to let the steamboat pass, and found that he had struck the mouth of a small spring branch. The spring was in sight up on the hillside, and he took a notion to run up there and get a drink of the clear, cold water.

Accordingly he drew the canoe up out of the water, and left it in a clump of bushes on the river's brink.

It was a wild, mountainous region thereabouts, and he stopped twice on the way up to enjoy the splendid scenery.

He finally reached the spring. It was a fine one, curbed up with stone, and appearances indicated that it was a water supply for some people not very far away.

He looked all around for some kind of habitation, but failed to see one.

"Where do those who use this spring live?" he asked himself as he looked about. "It seems that somebody must come a long way for water. I'll follow this little path and see where it leads to."

He followed a little pathway which led around toward the side of the mountain, which towered above a gorge, and had not gone fifty yards when he met a man with a rifle in his hands.

"Hello, stranger!" the man greeted.

"Hello!" he returned.

"Whar yer gwine, ef I may ax er question?"

"I'm going down the river."

"Yer be? 'Pears ter me yer gwine up the mountain."

"Oh, I came up to the spring to get a drink of water. My canoe is down there on the river bank."

"But yer was gwine away from ther river an' ther spring, too," said the man, eyeing him suspiciously.

Barry didn't like the man's way of talking to him, so he said:

"See here. This is a free country, where a man has a right

to come and go at his leisure so long as he does not trespass on another man's property. Is this your property here?"

"I guess it is, stranger."

"Then I beg your pardon, and will return to my canoe," and he turned to retrace his footsteps, when the man gave a peculiar whistle, and said:

"Halt, thar!"

Barry wheeled around, and found himself looking down the barrel of the man's rifle.

"Why, what in blazes is the matter!" he exclaimed.

"Matter enough!" was the reply. "Yer don't play any o' yer games on us, yer don't."

Three other men now came up, each carrying a rifle, and surrounded him.

Barry was unarmed.

He had left his gun and revolver in the canoe, not suspecting danger of any kind.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am unarmed, and you are four against one. Will you kindly explain to me what the trouble is?"

A sarcastic chuckle came from one of the four men, with the remark:

"As if yer didn't know."

"Well, I don't know, unless you are robbers."

"Well, we ain't no robbers. Government agents are the only robbers we have in these parts."

"Government agents?"

"Yes—and spies," said another.

"Oh!" and Barry burst into a hearty laughter. "I understand now. You take me for a revenue officer, whereas I am simply a college student on my vacation going down the river in a canoe just for the fun of the thing."

"That won't go down, stranger," said one of the men, shaking his head.

"That is to say that you don't believe my story?"

"That's it, stranger."

"You take me for a revenue officer?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'm not a grown man yet, you see, and the government does not appoint boys to official positions. I am unarmed. A revenue officer would not go hunting for you without being armed. Then there's my canoe down there in which I left Pittsburg this morning. Come down and look at it."

The four men moved in a body with him down to the canoe, where he showed them everything in it.

Still they were suspicious he was a spy for the revenue officers, and were not disposed to let him go. To do so, they feared, would lead to their detection, and they resolved to hold him.

"But you have no right to do that," he protested.

They laughed, and one of them said:

"We know that as well as you do, mister, but we'll do it all the same."

"But why not let me go now as well as any other time?" he asked.

"Don't know as we're gwine ter let yer go at all," said one of them. "We don't want ter take no chances, we don't."

"You are not satisfied that I am not a revenue officer?"

"Maybe ye're a spy—we don't know."

"Well, I am not. Here, I can show you letters which will convince you that I am a Yale College student."

"That's all right, mister," said one, who seemed to be something of a leader among them. "But how do we know yer won't put 'em on our track as soon as yer git home?"

"You'll have to take my word of honor on that," he replied.

"We don't take no stock in honor," said the man, with a sneer. "It ain't no good nowadays."

"You don't think there are any honorable men, then?"

"No."

"Well, you've been raised in a hard crowd, I guess."

"I've been raised ter look out for myself an' trust nobody," was the rejoinder.

CHAPTER XVII.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

Barry saw that he was in the hands of men who were determined to protect themselves at all hazards, and unless he could win their confidence that it would go hard with him. He knew full well that they did not mean to hold him as a prisoner and go to the trouble of keeping guard over him all the time.

"Rather than do that," he reasoned mentally to himself, "they'll put a bullet through me and throw me into the river."

The four men were whispering among themselves for several minutes, while Barry stood near his canoe.

By and by the leader turned to Barry and said:

"Stranger, yer may go, but ef yer say anything ag'in us yer'll wish yer had not bin born."

"I won't say a word about you to any living soul," said Barry.

"One of us will go with yer about 30 miles," said the speaker.

"That's all right," he returned. "There's room enough for two in the canoe."

"Yes—yer can go," and one of the men proceeded to place the canoe back in the water.

While this was being done Barry noticed the other three exchanging significant nods and winks, but he did not think much about it at the time.

Just as the man was getting into the canoe the leader said to him:

"Yer want ter make sure, Joe."

"Yes—I know," replied the man addressed as Joe.

Barry sat facing the man, and the man asked:

"Do yer row forward?"

"Yes."

"Lemme git to t'other end, then."

"That's the best seat where you are," said Barry, plying the paddle with great energy, and sending the canoe down the stream with good speed.

The man sat with his rifle lying across his lap, while Barry's gun lay in its place on the right hand side of the canoe.

"Yer kin row fast," remarked the moonshiner—for such he was—after they had gone about three miles down the river.

"Yes, I can go some ten or twelve miles an hour down-stream."

"That's gwine pretty fast."

"Yes."

Barry was doing some very hard thinking since he started with his guard. He began to suspect that the man had been sent to shoot him in the dark many miles below their place of operations, and then make his way back to his home. The injunction to "make sure" confirmed his suspicions, and the more he thought about it the more he believed he was right.

But how was he to evade the fate intended for him?

The moonshiner sat in front of him with his gun lying across his knees, so he could shoot the boy canoeist at any moment.

Barry pondered long over the problem, and at last decided that his only chance of escape lay in his being able to flip the rifle out of his lap into the river.

By that means he would have the advantage, for he could snatch up his gun and cover the moonshiner ere he could recover from his surprise at the loss of his rifle.

Having made up his mind to do that Barry kept his eye on the rifle and waited for his chance.

The sun sank down behind the hills, and the twilight began to grow darker every minute.

"We'll have to look out for supper," remarked Barry. "I've an oil stove with me on which I can cook almost anything. Ah! There's a wild turkey on that old log over there on the river bank. He's preparing to go to roost. Can you reach him with your rifle?"

"Reckon I kin," said the moonshiner, taking a quick aim and firing.

The turkey flopped off the log and began some lofty tumbling.

"I dropped 'im!" exclaimed the moonshiner, quite elated at the success of his shot.

"There goes another!" cried Barry, laying down the paddle and taking up his shotgun.

But instead of aiming at anything on the river bank, he pointed it directly at the moonshiner's breast, and said:

"My friend, I've got the drop on you. Your only chance to save your life is to jump out and swim ashore. Jump, now!"

The moonshiner was utterly dumfounded.

He glared at the muzzle of the gun, which was within three feet of him, and gasped:

"Don't shoot!"

"Overboard with you, then."

He rose to his feet and held his empty rifle in his left hand.

"Drop that rifle, and I'll lay it on the opposite bank for you where you can get it."

"I—I—want—ter take it——"

"Drop it, I say! I don't take any stock in moonshiners."

He dropped the rifle in the bottom of the canoe, and then prepared to jump overboard.

"If you upset this canoe I'll make an end of you. I use waterproof cartridges."

He made the leap without upsetting the canoe, and came up several feet away, and struck out for the left bank of the river.

Barry laid down his gun and took up the paddle again.

"I'll lay your rifle at the foot of that big oak over there," he sang out to the moonshiner. "You can swim over and get it, after which you can go back and tell your friends that you have done the job, and that they will never hear from me again."

The moonshiner reached the left bank and climbed out of the water, and stood there watching Barry deposit his rifle at the foot of a big tree on the opposite side of the river.

Then Barry went on down the river as fast as the double paddle could send him. In a very few minutes he was out of sight of the moonshiner.

Barry could not but chuckle over the way he had turned the tables on the moonshiner.

"The rascal would have murdered me in cold blood as soon as it became dark enough to prevent any one witnessing the crime," he said. "That's what they sent him with me for. I wonder what sort of a story he will tell when he returns to his companions? He won't dare tell them that I turned the tables on him and made him take water. They would almost murder him for his stupidity."

It was now growing quite dark, and Barry began to feel very hungry. But he decided to continue on his way another hour to make sure that he was beyond the reach of the moonshiner.

At the end of that time he found himself in the heart of a wild solitude, with not a single light to be seen in any direction.

"This is solitude with a vengeance," said he. "I never felt so lonesome in all my life. If I could hear a noise of some kind I'd feel a great relief. Here are hills on either side of the river that might well be called mountains, with not a human

being dwelling on them that I can see. This is a vast country—room enough for 500,000,000 or more people. I wonder if there are any slumbering echoes among these hills? I'll see if I can wake them up."

He took up his revolver and started to fire it off, when he decided that the shotgun would make a much louder report.

He laid it down and took up the shotgun and fired in the air.

The echo was remarkable.

It ran up and down the river, and then seemed to play around among the hills a while before going away off into the mountains miles and miles away.

"That is the finest echo I ever heard," he said. "I'll waste another cartridge just to hear it again," and he fired a second time.

The echoes repeated their wonderful performance, and the young canoeist listened with rapt attention.

Then he fired a chamber of the revolver to see what difference there would be in the nature of the echoes.

The difference was very great, so much so that he thought it very remarkable.

To test it still further he uttered a loud halloo, which resulted in still more wonderful replies from the hills and gorges.

"I am sorry I did not have the chance of going through here in daylight," he said. "I am tempted to tie up here till morning just to see the scenery by daylight."

He laid back in his seat and floated with the current, looking up at the dark mountains under the silent stars, till the damp dew warned him to get under cover.

Spreading the rubber cloth over himself and the greater part of the canoe, he resumed his restful contemplation of the scenery under starlight, floating with the current at the rate of about three miles per hour.

He thus spent several hours, and then a feeling of drowsiness came over him.

"I'll have to have some sleep," he said. "But I'll have to tie up to the bank somewhere to get it. To float with the current while asleep would be too dangerous. A steamboat might come along and send me to the bottom. I'll go in to the right bank and see if I can find a good place to tie up to," and he took up the paddle and changed the course of the canoe with a couple of strokes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DANGEROUS BOWLDER—BARRY RECEIVES A WARNING.

On coming within a few feet of the river bank, Barry found that the darkness was greater there than out in the middle of the stream. That was owing to the shadow cast by the mountain. The darkness was so great that he could not see the end of his canoe.

"This is rather like guesswork," he said. "I'll have to use the dark lantern in order to make sure of a safe place."

He soon lit the lantern, and by its aid succeeded in making fast to a swinging limb.

"I guess that is secure enough," he said, after having made fast to the limb. "I'll make my bed and lie down to pleasant dreams."

His bed was soon prepared, and in a very few minutes he was snugly ensconced under his blanket, with the rubber cover over the canoe to keep off the dew.

He had slept some two or three hours when he was awakened by a great splash in the water a little distance above him.

The water was greatly agitated, and he was almost thrown

out of the canoe by the tossing about on the waves occasioned by the splash he had heard.

"What in thunder was that?" he exclaimed, holding on to the canoe, and gazing around in the darkness as much as he could.

Then he waited to see if he could hear anything more. But a profound silence followed, and the agitation of the water ceased.

"It's very strange," he muttered to himself. "I can't understand it. Something both large and heavy must have fallen into the water. No fish could have disturbed it as much as that. Maybe I'll find out something about it in the morning." And he again laid down to resume the nap which had been so rudely broken.

It took him some time to get to sleep again; but when he did he slept soundly, for he did not awake until about sunrise.

Then he arose and looked around him.

The river was as placid as a mirror, and the mountain scenery grandly silent.

Then he turned his attention to the cause of the loud splash which had disturbed him during the night.

It did not take him long to find out, and the discovery of it made him shudder and his hair stand on end.

"Great Scott!" he gasped, as he looked up the mountain side, where an immense boulder of rock had broken loose from its fastenings and rolled down to the river. "It must have weighed 100 tons! No wonder it sent out waves that came near upsetting me! What an escape! Had I been fifty feet further upstream I would have been killed, and the world would never have known my fate."

Barry, mentally resolved never to sleep at the base of a steep mountain again, unless he knew there were no boulders overhead.

He did not seek to find out anything about the size of the boulder. It was enough for him to know that it was large enough to crush good-sized trees in its rush for the bottom of the river.

He cut loose from the limb which had held him all night, and rowed out into the middle of the stream. There he let the canoe float with the current, and proceeded to cook a good breakfast.

After breakfast he took up the paddle and sent the canoe flying through the water again at race speed.

The scenery on either hand was grand and picturesque, and he more than once regretted that he was not an artist that he might sketch some of the finest landscapes in all America.

Mile after mile was passed without bringing a human habitation into view. But about noon he struck a little village, where he stopped and bought a dozen eggs.

"Where are you going?" the country grocer asked him.

"Down the river to Louisville," he replied.

"What! In that canoe?"

"Yes—why not?"

The grocer whistled.

"What's the matter?" Barry asked.

"Nothing; only I would not like to make such a trip myself."

"Why not?"

"Because it's lonesome and dangerous."

"How dangerous?"

"There are lots of river thieves down the river between here and Cincinnati, who will be sure to give you trouble."

"Oh, I am not afraid of thieves," said the young canoeist. "I have nothing with me to tempt their cupidity, and, besides, I am well armed."

"Well, you want to be well armed on such a trip as that."

Barry laughed, and soon after returned to the canoe.

Once more he resumed the paddle, and went on his way. The

river was now much larger than at Pittsburg, and the current was calm and placid.

Several miles below the village he found a young girl about his own age rowing across the river in an old-style dugout. Their canoes came very near colliding.

"Hello!" he cried, quite anxious to make her acquaintance. "Can you tell me how far it is to the next town?"

"Town's t'other way, sir," she replied, in clear, musical tones.

"Yes, I know; but I am not going that way," he said. "I am going down the river."

"Well, I don't know of any other town down that way. I've never been anywhere down the river."

"Do you live near here?" he asked.

"Yes, sir—we live over the hills there," and she pointed toward the hills on the right bank of the river.

"Do you go out rowing by yourself this way often?"

"Yes, sir; whenever I wish to," she replied.

He then told her he was a college student out on his vacation, and she became interested in his story. She let her rude dugout float alongside of his canoe for more than a mile, during which time she had told him her name and all about herself.

At last she said she would have to go back, and he saw her leave with genuine regret.

"There's a girl who is worth her weight in gold," he said. "She is sensible and courageous, not afraid of work, and as pretty as a flower when dressed up in her Sunday clothes. What fine eyes she has, and the bloom of the rose is in her cheeks. It will be a long time before I forget her."

The young girl did really make a deep impression on the young canoeist, for he could not think of anything else during the rest of the day.

A few miles below the point where she left him he saw a flock of ducks on the water.

"Ah! There are no tame ducks in such a wild solitude as this," he said, as he laid down his paddle and prepared to use his gun.

He drifted within range and fired, killing two, and when they rose on the wing he succeeded in bringing down two or more before they could get away.

"That's good luck," he said, "but they won't do my larder any good, as I don't know how to clean and cook a duck. I'll take 'em along and give em away to somebody."

He gathered up the game and recharged the gun, after which he took up the paddle again. A mile further down he struck the same flock of ducks again, and he prepared to make another attack on them.

This time he got five out of the flock, and as they flew up instead of down the river it was the last he saw of them.

"Nine ducks out of one flock isn't bad gunning," he remarked as he gathered up the game. "I guess I could make a pretty good sportsman if I were to try my hand at it."

Going on down the river, he came in sight of a couple of log cabins on the right bank, up above the high-water line. A thin wreath of smoke issued from the chimney of one of them.

He was nearly abreast of the cabins, when two men came out and looked at him.

"Hello, thar!" one of them called.

"Hello!" returned Barry.

"Got any terbacker?"

"No—don't use it."

"Can't yer stop a while?"

"No."

"Better stop."

"Can't do it."

"Hold on, then, an' have company," called out the other man, running down to the river bank to where a skiff lay tied to a limb of a bush.

"They must be a couple of river thieves that grocer spoke

to me about," said Barry to himself as he looked at them. "But if they catch up with me they will have to do some pretty tall rowing."

They both sprang into the skiff, and each took up a pair of oars.

"Hello!" exclaimed Barry to himself. "That's four heavy oars against one double paddle! That's more than I counted on. Well, here goes! Let them catch me if they can."

CHAPTER XIX.

A FIGHT WITH RIVER THIEVES.

The two men in the skiff were stalwart rowers. They made long sweeps with their oars like men who had been trained in the hard school of seafaring life. Barry gazed at them for a few moments, and saw that if he got away from them he would have to do some of the best rowing he had ever done in all his life.

Then he began using the double paddle for all he was worth.

The canoe went through the water at a rate of speed that seemed to astonish the two men in the skiff. But they bent to their oars like old sailors, and the skiff gained on the canoe, a fact which Barry discovered ere he had gone a half mile.

"They are gaining on me," he said, "but I am not going to let 'em get up to me. They mean mischief or they would not pursue me this way."

He laid down his paddle and took up the Spencer repeating shotgun.

"I have six charges of buckshot which they will get if they don't haul off," he said.

On seeing the gun the two men rested on their oars and glared at him.

They were armed with revolvers, and drew them.

"Here's twelve shots to yer one," said the forward man in the skiff.

"Yes, but mine is the best. When I shoot down comes the game," replied Barry.

"Oh, that's er shotgun. Drop it, or I'll shoot."

"Nary drop!" said Barry.

The man aimed at him with his revolver and fired. Barry did not fear it at that distance, yet he heard the shrill whistle of the bullet.

"That's done to draw my fire," he said, "and I am going to pretend to fall into their trap."

He fired at them, and the shot rattled all around them.

They gave a whoop, and took up their oars.

They thought to run in on him ere he could reload, hence the shout of exultation they gave.

"Oh, don't they pull for the prize," thought Barry, as he stood up in the canoe and watched them. "I'll give them a surprise they little dream of when they get nearer."

By and by they came in range, and Barry aimed and fired at them, giving them a peppering of buckshot that made them howl with pain and rage.

They dropped their oars and drew their revolvers, but ere they could fire he gave them another peppering.

Howls came in response, and one of them sent a bullet whistling over Barry's head.

Crack! crack! crack!

They were peppered from head to feet, and yelled:

"Let up! Let up! We surrender!"

"I've got six more charges ready for you!" said Barry, slyly slipping in six more cartridges.

"You killed us both!" cried one.

"Yes—I'm shot all to pieces!" cried the other.

"Well, it's all right, ain't it?" Barry said.

"No, it ain't, blast yer!" replied one of them, firing at the young canoeist.

The bullet actually cut a hole in Barry's hat.

"Then I'll make it all right," cried Barry, raising his Spencer and giving them four shots in rapid succession.

They threw themselves into the bottom of the skiff, howling like lunatics.

Barry slipped four buckshot cartridges into the Spencer, and stood ready to give them something more if necessary.

"Take your oars and go back, or I'll give you some more!" he sang out to them.

They would not get up, so he gave them another shower.

A dozen shot struck the skiff, and did no little damage.

"How's that?" he asked.

"That's enough!" they answered, and then they agreed to row the other way if he would promise not to fire again.

"All right. Go to work."

They got up and seized the oars, and the way they used them convinced Barry that they were glad enough to get away from such a gun as the Spencer repeating shotgun.

Barry could not refrain from indulging in a crow, and had they not seen him they might have thought that a game cock somewhere on the river bank was crowing triumphantly over them.

"I guess they'll have a time picking shot out of each other's hides," said Barry, gazing up the river after them. "They won't feel like tackling a boy in a canoe very soon again, I'm thinking."

When they were out of range he laid down his gun and took up his paddle, saying:

"I am under obligations to that country grocer for giving me warning of the fellows. I might have been robbed and killed but for his warning."

He was soon out of sight of the two river thieves and their cabins, and then he turned his attention to things in his front.

As he made his way over toward the right bank of the river he saw a large deer gazing at him from out of a clump of bushes.

"By George! but I'll give you some buckshot, old fellow!" he exclaimed in low, but excited, tones.

Taking up the gun he aimed quickly, and fired.

The buck sprang up several feet, snorted vigorously, and staggered away.

Through an opening in the bushes he got a broadside glimpse of the noble game, and gave him another shot.

That settled him.

The buck staggered a few paces and fell in the agonies of death.

"That's my prize," said Barry, "and I'm going to have his haunches at all hazards."

He landed, and proceeded at once to secure the hams, both of which he brought down and placed in the canoe.

"That's game for you," he said, as he resumed the journey. "I'll have some venison steak for dinner, or know the reason why."

Laying down the paddle he proceeded to get his little oil stove in a position to be used, after which he cut a couple of steaks from one of the haunches and laid it aside.

That done he proceeded on his way, wondering what he would do with so much fresh game on his hands.

When noon came he cooked the steaks and ate them.

"I don't wonder that hunters have good appetites," he said. "A man who has no appetite for a venison steak has no business living."

Some time in the middle of the afternoon he struck another village on the banks of the river, and seeing some children playing near the boat landing, he hailed them, and asked the name of the place.

They told him, and he then asked if there was a poor widow in the place.

"Yes, sir," said a bright little twelve-year-old girl. "There's two of 'em, and one of 'em is an old maid."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir."

"And are they very poor?" he asked, laughing at the idea of a widow who was an old maid.

"Yes, sir; they are awful poor."

"Well, I've got something here for them—some venison and ducks. Can you get some boys to take them up to her house?"

"My papa will take 'em, sir," said another little girl, as she saw a man coming toward them.

The man volunteered to take the game to the two poor women, adding:

"It will be a God-send to them, sir."

"Well, I'm sorry it isn't more," said Barry.

"Shall I tell them who sent it?"

"Say it was sent by a schoolboy out on a canoe voyage down the river."

"What name, sir?"

"Oh, never mind the name. Just give 'em the game."

"It's awfully kind of you, sir," said the twelve-year-old girl.

"This would be a very bad world if there were no kind people in it, young lady," said Barry.

"Yes, indeed, sir. Are you a real schoolboy?"

"Yes. I am a Yale College student, and now on my vacation."

"How long have you been out?"

"Over a week now."

"In that canoe?"

"Yes; I eat and sleep in it."

She was thunderstruck, and looked upon him as a very brave youth.

He stopped there nearly a half hour talking with the children. The man who carried the game to the two poor women came back to tell him that they shed tears of joy when he told them that the things had been sent to them as a present.

"Well, I am glad that they have been made happy once in their lives," said Barry. "Can you tell me how far it is to the next town?"

"Yes, sir. It's twenty-three miles."

"I can reach there before sunset," he remarked. "Have they got a hotel there?"

"Yes, sir—a very good one, too."

"Well, good-by, all," he said, and in another moment he was off as fast as the canoe could carry him.

The little village was soon left far behind with its two poor widows, "one of whom was an old maid."

CHAPTER XX.

THE DARKY AND HIS VENISON—BARRY UP A TREE.

On the way down to the next village Barry shot and killed another deer, got the two haunches and put them in the canoe.

Half an hour later he met one of the big steamers coming up the river, and came near being swamped by her swash.

"You'se gwine ter git drowned in dat 'ere boat ef youse ain't mighty keerful, boss," called a voice from the south side of the river a little while after the steamboat passed him.

He looked around, but could see no one. He knew that the voice came from a Virginia negro, though, for the vernacular was not to be mistaken.

"I guess I can keep afloat," Barry replied, without having seen the negro.

"Youse am lucky, den, shuah."

"Yes, I was born lucky."

By this time the Virginia ducky had come into view. He was seated under a clump of bushes fishing.

"What luck fishing?" Barry asked.

"Ain't got no luck, boss."

"Haven't caught your supper yet?"

"No, sah, fo' er fac'."

Barry turned his canoe toward the Virginia side of the river, and ran in to where the ducky was seated under the bushes.

"Do you live near here?"

"Yes, sah; back dar ober dat hill."

"Got any family?"

"Yes, sah; got four chillun, and nuffin' ter eat."

"And the fish won't bite?"

"No, sah, fo' er fac'."

"How about the hen roosts in the neighborhood?"

"Dar ain't no mo' chickens, boss," and the son of Ham shook his woolly head with a very sad look on his face.

"Got 'em all, have you?"

"No, sir; dey's too pertickler wid 'em, fo' er fac'."

"Well, here's something for you. I killed a fine buck up the river a few miles back, and I have no use for it," and he showed him the two haunches as he spoke.

The ducky's eyes nearly popped out of his head. He could hardly believe his sense of hearing.

"Boss, yer ain't foolin' dis nigger, is yer?"

"Why no, old man. Here, take 'em out, and good luck to you."

The ducky took them up, and grinned from ear to ear. He was too happy to talk, so he stood there and grinned and chuckled like an idiot till Barry said:

"You don't like venison, I guess."

"Golly, boss, it's der best meat in de worl'," and he then began to smack his thick lips and pour forth his thanks in the peculiar vernacular of the Virginia negro.

Barry listened till he grew tired, and then said:

"Don't eat it all at one meal, old man, but salt and smoke it, to keep for hard times."

"Dat's er fac', boss. I'se jest ergwine ter keep it ter smell ob, I is."

Barry laughed and pushed off down the river again, leaving the happy negro standing there grinning, with the deer's haunches in his hands.

"Well, that's one happy negro, I guess," he remarked. "They'll make those two haunches last about two days, after which they'll all grow hungry again."

The high hills now began to disappear, and now and then Barry caught a glimpse of well-cultivated farms along the river side.

"This begins to look like civilization again," he remarked, as he gazed at a large white farmhouse back a little distance from the river. "That farmer over there seems to live in the midst of plenty. His fields are full of grain and orchards laden with fruit. I wish I could see some big, ripe watermelons close down by the river; I'd hook two of them. But it's too early in the season for them."

A few minutes later he struck a farm where the orchard extended down to the river. Some of the trees were laden with early apples, which tempted him to land and secure some of them.

He ran the canoe into the bank and sprang out. He made for a tree about fifty yards back from the water's edge, and had secured a hatful of the golden fruit, when he heard a dog bark and the gruff voice of a man sing out:

"Catch 'im, Tige!"

He looked around and saw that the man and the dog were between him and his canoe, cutting off his retreat.

The dog was a big, fierce-looking brute, and Barry did not care to fight him, so he dropped the apples and climbed up the tree just in time to escape him.

The dog yelped angrily, and the man came up mad as a hornet, exclaiming:

"I've caught you, have I. I am going to give you a dose this time you won't forget very soon. Come down, sir."

"Not till that dog goes away, I won't," replied Barry.

"You won't, eh?"

"No, I won't."

"Well, I'll see if I can't make you come down," and the man picked up several stones as large as hen's eggs and began throwing at him.

"Hold up, now," said Barry. "I am willing to pay you for a peck of apples."

"A peck! Why, you've had barrels out of this orchard, you cheeky thief!" and he sent another stone crashing through the leaves.

"Why, I never was here before in my life!" cried Barry. "Let up till I can make an explanation."

But the irate farmer would not let up. He hurled stone after stone at him, one of which struck him on the thigh, inflicting very great pain.

The dog was at the foot of the tree, making desperate efforts to get at him. Barry was in a tight place. To stay up in the tree would be very dangerous, as a stone might hit him on the leg or head, or in the face, and to drop down into the dog's mouth was not to be thought of for a moment.

Barry saw his dilemma, and met it promptly.

He drew his revolver, which he happened to have with him, and aiming at the dog fired.

The dog gave a yelp, and laid down to die at his post.

The farmer howled with rage.

Barry dropped to the ground and pointed the weapon at the farmer.

"Don't shoot! Don't shoot!" the farmer yelled, turning and running toward the house as fast as his heels could carry him.

"Hanged if I lose my apples!" said Barry, picking up enough to fill his hat again and starting for his canoe.

As soon as he was on board again he struck out for the middle of the stream.

"That old fellow will come back with a gun," he said, rowing with all his might. "If he has a rifle he can give me some trouble, but a shotgun can't reach across the river."

He had nearly reached the other side of the river when he heard a whoop over in the orchard.

The old man was there with a double-barreled shotgun.

"Come back or I'll fire!" cried the farmer.

Barry picked up his Spencer repeating gun, and replied:

"Hurry back to the house, old man, or I'll make holes all through you."

The old man thought it was a rifle, and lost no time in retreating.

CHAPTER XXI.

DOWN THE OHIO TO PARKERSBURG.

Barry could not help laughing as he saw the old man retreat toward the house a second time.

"I'm sorry it happened," he said. "I would have paid him ten times as much as the apples were worth, but he wouldn't listen to me. I had to kill the dog to keep the old man from stoning me to death. I guess the boys have been making pretty free with his orchard. He took me for one of a gang, I guess. I can't blame him very much, but I couldn't stay up there in that tree and let him keep throwing stones at me till he knocked me out for his dog to chew on."

In a few minutes the farmhouse was out of sight, and the canoe making at least ten or twelve miles an hour.

A couple of miles further on he struck a good-sized village.

"Ah! The boys from this village worry the old man's apples, I guess. He'll come tearing down here to have me arrested for killing his dog. It won't do to stop here, so I'll go by as fast as I can."

He passed the village with but half a dozen people to see him, and in twenty minutes more was far below it.

"If he catches me he'll have to use the telegraph," he remarked, as he used the paddle for all he was worth.

He never heard from the farmer again, and did not want to. So far as apples were concerned, he made up his mind that he would buy all he wanted after that.

Later in the afternoon he struck Wheeling, and was surprised at the size of it. It was a second Pittsburg on a smaller scale. The smoke from her foundries and iron works hung over the city like a cloud.

But he stopped there only a half hour, fearing that to stay longer might put him back in reaching Moundsville, where he wanted to stop for the night.

From Wheeling down to Moundsville a railroad ran along both banks, so he was not without a good deal of company.

Night overtook him when he was yet ten miles from Moundsville. But as the river was broad and the stars quite clear he did not mind that.

By hard rowing he reached the town by nine o'clock, and tied up at the foot of one of the streets. He went to the hotel, got a supper, and went back to the canoe, where he at once rolled in his blanket and went to sleep.

When he woke up the sun was just peeping over the hills, and a few early risers were moving about the end of the street down at the river.

One man came down to look at his canoe, and on seeing him cooking breakfast on his oil stove he uttered exclamations of surprise that told how little he had seen of the world.

"How fur hev yer come in thet thing, mister?" the man asked.

"From Pittsburg," Barry replied.

"Gosh, no!" yelled the man, with the energy of one suddenly stung.

"Gosh, yes!" exclaimed Barry.

"Yer don't say so?"

"Yes, I do, and I'm going all the way down to the Mississippi."

"Gosh!" gasped the man.

"Why it's nothing. All you have to do is to keep going, and by and by you'll get there—down to the Gulf of Mexico, if you want to."

"But how's yer gwine ter get back, I'd like to know?"

"Why, I'll take my canoe on board a railroad train and go home that way."

"Gosh! You must have a power of money."

"No; I've got very little. I'll borrow enough from some fool to pay my way back home again."

"Gosh!" and the man stood around until he saw the young canoeist cook and eat his breakfast.

Barry put things to rights and took up his double paddle. The countryman gazed after him till he was clean out of sight, and then went about through the village with a wonderful story to tell.

Towns and villages now came into view along the river every ten or fifteen miles, and good farms were seen, with bits of mountain scenery here and there.

Nothing of interest occurred during that day, and when night came on, he was approaching Parkersburg on the West Virginia side of the river.

Parkersburg is a very lively town, and Barry resolved to stop at a hotel there for the night.

Accordingly he hired a small boy to show him the way to the best hotel in the town, and taking the canoe on his shoulders followed him up through one of the main streets.

Ere he reached the hotel a motley crowd of men and boys, white and black, had gathered around him.

The landlord of the hotel was amazed at the crowd which had suddenly invaded his house. Barry had to make an explanation ere he would take him in, after which he was as accommodating as one could desire.

The news spread through the town that a Yale College student was in town on his way to the Gulf in a frail canoe, and all the sports and young bloods in the place naturally wanted to see him.

During the evening the hotel was crowded, and among those who called were two Yale graduates who had been out of school some twenty years or more.

They came up and shook hands with him, giving him certain secret society grips, which he instantly recognized and returned. After that he felt perfectly at home.

"You want to wait another day to let us give you a good send-off," remarked one of the old Yale men.

"I must leave as soon after breakfast as possible," he said in reply. "I don't want any send-off. They don't do any good, but merely delay me. I am very grateful to you for the suggestion, though."

It was a very late hour when he retired that night, and the result was that he did not feel very refreshed when he arose the next morning.

But he found the two old Yale men in the breakfast room waiting for him to come downstairs.

"We are ahead of you," remarked one of them.

"Yes; you must have sat up all night to do it," he replied.

"Oh, no. On the contrary, we have both had a good night's sleep," they said. "We want to show you that two old Yale boys can be as lively as the young ones when they take the notion to."

"Well, I have to thank you for the honor you have done me,"

"Oh, we are bound to see you off. We've got a nigger to carry your canoe for you, and all that sort of thing."

They ate a hearty breakfast together, and then started out to the river with him, a negro preceding them with the canoe on his shoulders.

When half way down to the river, a big, burly fellow drew a revolver and began firing at the canoe, while the negro danced and yelled like a lunatic.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MAN WITH A RIFLE.

The sudden attack on the negro carrying the canoe created a panic among the spectators in the crowd. They scattered, some knocking others down in their frantic efforts to get out of range of the bullets, and not a few women and children were thus injured.

"Hol' on, dar! Hol' on, dar, I tole yer!" yelled the negro, and in his panic-stricken frame of mind he bolted through the crowd, still keeping his grip on the canoe, and ran down another street as fast as his legs could carry him.

Just as Barry was about to draw his own weapon and return the fire of the assailant the police rushed in and secured the man, who proved to be intoxicated.

"What's the matter with that man?" he asked of one of the officers.

"Drunk on bug juice," was the sententious reply.

"Bug juice? What's that?"

The officer looked at him in surprise, and answered:

"It's cold p'izen, sir."

"Well, it acts as if it was." And he smiled at the surprised expression on the policeman's face.

The negro with the canoe reached the river by another street, and was rewarded with a five-dollar bill for his promptness.

One bullet had struck the canoe near the top edge and passed clear through.

"Wha' fo' dat man shoot at me?" the darky asked.

"Drunk," said some one in the crowd.

"I nebber was so skeered in my life," remarked the darky.

"A miss is as good as a mile," remarked Barry.

"Yes, sah, dat's er fac', but I rudder hab de mile, boss," and a hearty laugh from the crowd showed that they quite agreed with him on that point.

"Well, I wouldn't care if he had missed the canoe a mile," said Barry.

"Yes, sah—but I redder he hit dat dan plunk me."

"Sensible to the last," exclaimed Barry. "I won't growl about that. On the contrary, I am glad it didn't hit you."

The crowd cheered themselves hoarse as the boy canoeist entered the canoe and took up the paddle. He waved his hat to those on the river bank, and quietly waited for the signal that was to start him precisely at noon.

Finally the signal was given, and he dipped his paddle in the water with an energy which showed that he was an expert in the use of it.

They cheered him till he was too far away to hear them, and then he waved his hat back at them.

"That was a good send-off," he said as he pulled away with all his might. "They are a jolly set of fellows back there, and nothing can set them back when they go in to do a thing."

He was now bending all his energies to reach Cincinnati just as soon as he could. It was a long way to go, but he didn't mind that.

"I ought to reach it in two or three days," he said; "but it depends on how hard I work. The river is not as straight as an arrow, nor the current as swift as a mill race, but I'm going to get there at any rate. Hello! here comes another steamboat!"

A big steamer was coming up the river, puffing as if very tired of the heavy load on board.

He drew aside to avoid the swash of the steamer, and then passed on.

The scenery was good for many miles down the river, and he was enjoying it to his heart's content, when he was interrupted by a call from the right bank.

"Hello, there!"

"Hello, yourself!"

"Come ashore."

"Can't do it. I am in a hurry."

"I guess you had better come ashore," said the man, producing a rifle.

"I beg to be excused. I am in a hurry," repeated Barry, not really satisfied that the man intended to intimidate him.

"You come ashore now, or I'll give you more lead than you can chew!" said the man, using the rifle in a demonstrative manner.

"What in thunder do you mean?" Barry asked, suddenly stopping the canoe.

"I mean that if you don't come ashore here I'll make holes through you."

"What do you want?"

"Come and see, and be quick about it, too," was the gruff response.

There was no other recourse. He had no chance to get a shot, for the man not only had a rifle, but he had the drop on him.

The man who has the drop on another has the advantage every time, and Barry was painfully conscious of it in this instance.

"Are you coming?" the man asked.

"Yes. I can't help myself, I suppose," and he turned the canoe toward the spot where the man was standing.

When he approached the bank he saw that the man was a hard-looking case, with the face of one who would not hesitate to commit a crime if the temptation to do so came in his way.

Barry had his revolver in his pocket, and resolved to use it if the man attempted any violence toward himself.

"What do you want?" he asked of the man, as soon as the canoe touched the bank.

"I want you to come out of that canoe."

"Why should I?" Barry asked.

"To save your life, for if you do not I'll give you a bullet."

"But why do you——"

"See here, youngster, I won't have any fooling. Come out of that canoe or I'll end you at once. I've no time to be answering a boy's questions."

Barry did not provoke him further, but proceeded to get out of the boat.

"Just walk back a few paces," said the man, motioning toward the bushes with his left hand.

Barry obeyed, and the man very quietly proceeded to take possession of the canoe.

"What are you going to do?" Barry asked. "Take the canoe?"

"Yes, of course."

"Well, you needn't do that. I am going down to the Mississippi on a vacation, and will take you as far as you want to go, and it shall not cost you one cent."

"Do you take me for a fool? You could have me arrested at any point where I should leave you."

"But I won't do it, though."

The man laughed.

"I won't trust you, young man. You can try life in the woods for a while, as I've been doing."

"Well, let me have my shotgun so I won't starve. You won't have any use for it."

The man looked down at the Spencer repeating shotgun, and asked:

"Is it loaded?"

The man saw that it had but one barrel, hence took it for a single-barreled shotgun. He took it up, fired one charge in the air, and then tossed it ashore.

Barry picked it up, and saw that the man little dreamed that it still contained five charges.

"Give me some ammunition with it?" he asked.

"No. Buy some in the village below here six miles away."

Then the man laid down his rifle and picked up the paddle.

Quick as a flash Barry leveled the shotgun at him, and said:

"I've got the drop on you now. Hold up your hands!"

The man was dumfounded.

"Why, you haven't any load in that gun!" he said.

"It is a repeater, like a revolver," replied Barry, "and has five charges of buckshot in it yet. Hold up your hands or I'll riddle you!"

He held up his hands.

"Now, come out!"

The man hesitated.

"Come out or I'll give you a load of buckshot!"

He stepped out of the canoe.

"Move back there a little bit, just as I did."

The man did so, and Barry got into the canoe again.

"Now, you can come back in again," Barry said, after placing the rifle and shotgun out of the way under his seat and back of it.

"Give me my rifle, and I'll stay in the woods," said the man.

"Not much I won't. You can ride down the river with me, but you don't come any more games on me."

"You can fire it off, and——"

"I won't do that unless I fire it at you. A rifle could reach me clear across the river, and I am not going to let you monkey with me."

"I—I—don't care to go with you," the man stammered.

Barry drew his six-shooter and said:

"You get in, and sit right there in front of me, facing down the stream, or I'll open fire on you!" and he cocked the weapon and aimed at him as he spoke.

The man turned pale as death, but made no reply. In another moment he was obeying the order of the boy canoeist.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ARREST OF THE DESPERADO.

Barry kept his eye on every movement of the man till he was seated in the canoe.

"Sit with your back to me," ordered Barry.

"Why not facing you?"

"Because I am not going to have you in a position where you can jump on me while I have the paddle in my hands."

"But I won't do anything of the kind," said the man. "I'll sit still, and won't move."

"You can't make any promise that I would believe. Turn your back and face down the river. I am not the man, or boy, for you to fool with."

The man turned and faced down the stream.

"Now, if you make a movement to turn around this way I'll drop my paddle and open fire on you. Do you understand that?"

"Yes."

"Well, don't forget it," and the boy canoeist proceeded to use the paddle to resume his journey.

He wondered who the man was, and why he had done as he did, and the suspicion crept into his mind that he was a desperate criminal who was seeking a means of escape from the officers of the law.

After going about five miles the man said:

"If it's all the same to you, I'd like to get out here, on the other side of the river."

"But it's not all the same to me," replied Barry. "I am going to take you fifty miles down the river, and——"

"But I don't want to go fifty miles down the river!" the man protested.

"Well, I didn't want to get out and give up the canoe to you, either, but I had to do it all the same. You'll keep your seat there."

"By why do you want to carry me so far?"

"Simply because you don't want to go, that's all. I want to punish you for the little game you played on me."

"But you won the game."

"So I did, but you can't say that you are glad of it."

That silenced him, and for a distance of ten miles or more he never uttered a word.

But when they were approaching a town of considerable size the man began to get nervous. He squirmed about on his seat as if feeling very uncomfortable.

Barry noticed his nervousness, and half suspected that the man was afraid of being recognized by some one in the town.

"There's a steamboat at the wharf there," remarked Barry. "Do you know what place it is?"

"No, I don't," was the gruff reply.

"Don't you live in this part of the country?"

"No; I live in Indiana."

"Why, what were you doing out in the woods so far from home?"

"I was on horseback for a week till somebody stole my horse."

"So you thought you would rob me of my canoe, and let me go afoot a while?"

"Yes."

"Well, it didn't work! I'll have to turn out of the way of that steamboat."

"Yes; turn away over to the other side, or you may be swamped by the waves from her wheels."

But Barry didn't turn out so far. He had a little game to play, which he intended to spring on the villain just as soon as the steamboat was out of the way.

The canoe made a little to the left and let the steamer pass, and then made direct for the wharf, on which fully a hundred people were standing gazing after the big river steamboat.

"Where are you going?" the man asked, growing quite nervous.

"I am going to stop here a half hour to buy some provisions for my trip down the river."

"I say, mister!" and the man turned half way around as he spoke, "I—I—don't want to go there."

"Well, what of that?"

"I'll give you ten dollars if you'll keep on down the river, and it's all I've got, too."

"I don't want your money," replied Barry, "but I'm going to stop here all the same."

"I'm going to jump overboard and swim across," said the man, growing desperately excited.

"If you do I'll shoot you."

"You wouldn't dare shoot a man in the presence of so many witnesses."

"Try me and see. You were about to shoot me, and so I have no hesitation in opening fire on you if you provoke me to it."

Nevertheless the man plunged into the river and disappeared from sight.

When he reappeared he was some ten or twelve feet away.

Barry knew that the man was a desperate character, and that he would upset the canoe if he interfered with him. He had no idea of shooting him at all.

But he stood up in the canoe and sang out to the people on the wharf:

"Send a boat here to save this man. He'll overturn this canoe and drown both of us."

In another minute two batteaux were coming toward them, and the desperado was swimming with all his might toward the other bank of the river.

He was a bold swimmer, and was making some good strokes when Barry called out to the batteaux:

"Hurry up, or he'll drown."

They redoubled their efforts, and in due time came up to the canoe.

"I think he is a daring, desperate criminal," said Barry in low tones. "You may strike a rich reward by arresting him."

"I wonder if he is Bill Tillottson?" one of the men asked of another.

"Hurry up and see," suggested Barry, leading the way in the pursuit.

It did not take them long to overtake him, and then one of them exclaimed:

"Why, it's Tillottson!"

"Hello, Bill!" called out another.

They rowed up and seized him.

In a few minutes they had dragged him into the boat, whereupon he began a most terrific abuse of the young canoeist.

"Oh, that's all right," said Barry, laughing. "I can afford to stand all the abuse you can give me;" and then turning to one of the men in the first batteau, he asked:

"What crime has he committed?"

"Arson."

"The deuce you say!"

"Yes. He is one of the worst in the country."

"Well, he looks like a hard case."

"He is a hard one."

Barry went ashore with them, and there met a crowd of people who knew the man who had attempted to rob him of his canoe.

Then he told his story of how he had met and captured the villain after he had been robbed of his canoe.

The crowd cheered him for his exploit, and insisted that he should stop over till the next morning and see the sheriff of the county, who would be telegraphed for at once.

Barry decided that it would be a good idea to do so, and so he took the canoe upon his shoulder and marched up the main street of the town to a hotel, where a large crowd soon gathered to look at him and his wonderful little craft.

During the afternoon the whole town had heard the story of the plucky Yale College boy and his canoe, and hundreds came to see him and shake his hand.

Tillottson was locked up in the jail till the sheriff came, which he did late that night. The next morning the sheriff told him that \$500 reward had been offered for the arrest of the man, and that he was clearly entitled to it.

"Give \$100 each to the two men who came out to me in the batteaux," said Barry, "and send the balance to me at Yale College, and I'll be more than satisfied."

"That's generous enough on your part," said the sheriff. "The law would give the entire sum to you."

"That may be, but those two fellows ought to have something, I think."

"Well, I'll follow your instructions in the matter," said the sheriff.

Barry left the place at noon with some 200 people to see him off in his canoe.

"Come and see us on your way back home," said the sheriff.

"Perhaps I may, but I can't promise to do so," he replied.

"How far is it down to Cincinnati?"

"About 150 miles by way of the river."

He waved the little flag he had with him, and the people cheered until he was too far away for them to hear him.

"That was a lucky scrape for me," he said to himself, as he made his way along the broad river; "but I wouldn't like to go through it again for even double the reward offered for the villain. He came near making me turn gray with suspense as to how I should dispose of him. He is locked up safe enough now, though, the pesky villain."

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

Barry met with no adventures between there and Cincinnati. He passed many towns and villages on both sides of the river, at some of which he stopped a few moments to buy a few things he needed in the way of provisions.

When night came on he rowed hard till midnight, after which he tied up to the Kentucky side and slept till sunrise.

Then he struck a negro shanty on the river bank about a half mile below, and got the old colored hostess to fry him a chicken in the Southern style.

He did not regret the delay, for he thought it the most delicious meal he had ever eaten. Having paid the old darky he resumed his trip, and pushed down the river for all he was worth.

When night overtook him again he was still many miles away from Cincinnati, but he made up his mind to get there that night if muscle could do it.

Splash! Splash!

Splash! Splash!

The paddle struck the water on either side with clock-like regularity, and the canoe skimmed along on the bosom of the placid river like a thing of ilfe.

Mile after mile was reeled off, and along about one o'clock in the morning he caught a glimpse of the lights of the city.

With a whoop he splashed away, and went down the river at steamboat speed.

He struck a steamboat landing and proceeded to land and take the canoe with him to a hotel.

"Here, there—what's that you've got there?" demanded a policeman.

"I've got my canoe," was Barry's reply.

"Your canoe? Let's see that canoe," and the officer made him put it down so he could see what was in it.

The contents excited his surprise as well as his suspicions.

"This may be all right," he said to Barry, "but I want to make sure of it. Take it up, and bring it along with me."

"Do you arrest me?"

"Yes."

"What for?"

"Come along to the station house and see," and he grabbed Barry by the collar as he spoke.

"Well, you think me a thief, or suspicious character, I suppose. You may carry the canoe yourself. I won't take it."

"Where were you going to take it?"

"To a hotel."

"Well, I'll take you to a hotel," and he took the canoe on his shoulder and ordered Barry to march on before him to the station house.

Barry knew it would be worse than folly to resist, so he went along as quietly as a lamb, and arrived at the station in a few minutes.

There he made an explanation to the captain and showed him extracts from the Pittsburg papers that satisfied that official that he was not in any way a suspicious character.

"You may go, sir," said the captain. "You should not have been arrested."

"Can I leave my canoe here till morning?"

"Yes. Certainly."

He went to a hotel and took a room where he slept well after the hard row for the last fifty miles.

The next morning he arose early, and then went down to breakfast, after which he went for his canoe and brought it to the hotel.

The reporters of the evening papers heard of his arrival through the police, and came to see him and his canoe. They all interviewed him, and many a column appeared about him that afternoon.

The Yale crew had sent one of their members to meet him at Cincinnati, and the two met that evening.

It was a jolly meeting, and the sports of the city joined in to make the evening an enjoyable one.

"I say, Barry," said his chum of the Yale crew, "we have put up money on you making the distance from Cincinnati to Louisville in twenty hours. Can you do it?"

"What's the distance?"

The distance was given him as near as could be ascertained. Barry scratched his head.

"That's twenty hours of hard work, Dolph?" he said.

"Yes, but we have dared to make the bet, and I want to telegraph 'yes' or 'no.' What say you?"

"Telegraph 'em that I'll make it if I can, and I'll do my best, you can bet."

"Well, let me tell you that you can make \$500 if you can go it in twenty hours."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; and I am going to bet that you can, with the understanding that half of what I win shall be yours."

"Well, I'll do the best rowing I ever did in my life."

"Just keep up a steady speed, and you can make it with ease. I'll go down the river by rail to keep an eye on you. I am sure you can make it."

"The current is not as strong on the Ohio as it is on the Alleghany," remarked Barry.

"I am aware of that," said Dolph. "When can you start?"

"At sunrise to-morrow morning."

"Very well, I'll be on hand with you. So will a number of others."

Precisely at sunrise Barry started from one of the steamboat landings at Cincinnati for Louisville with a crowd of several hundreds to see him off.

In half an hour's time he could not even see any of the suburban residences of the "Queen City of the West."

He was going for all he was worth, and was determined to keep up the steady stroke all day long.

Three times during the day did he see Dolph at one of the villages along the river, who cheered him on.

"I'll win this race if I never win another," he said, pulling away with all his might.

Steadily he pulled, and mile after mile was left behind him on the placid bosom of the Ohio.

Night came on, and he did not know where he was or how far he was from Cincinnati or Louisville.

But he did not let up in his work.

At last he saw the lights of the city, and when he arrived there found Dolph and quite a party waiting to receive him.

He won by nearly two hours, and the boys made the welkin ring with their shouts as he landed after an incessant row of eighteen hours.

He rested two days in Louisville, and then set out to reach the mouth of the river at Cairo, and reached there in due time.

Placing the canoe in an express office, he ordered it sent to New York, and took the same train to go with it.

The Yale crew hailed him as their champion, and to this day he is known as THE BOY CANOEIST.

THE END.

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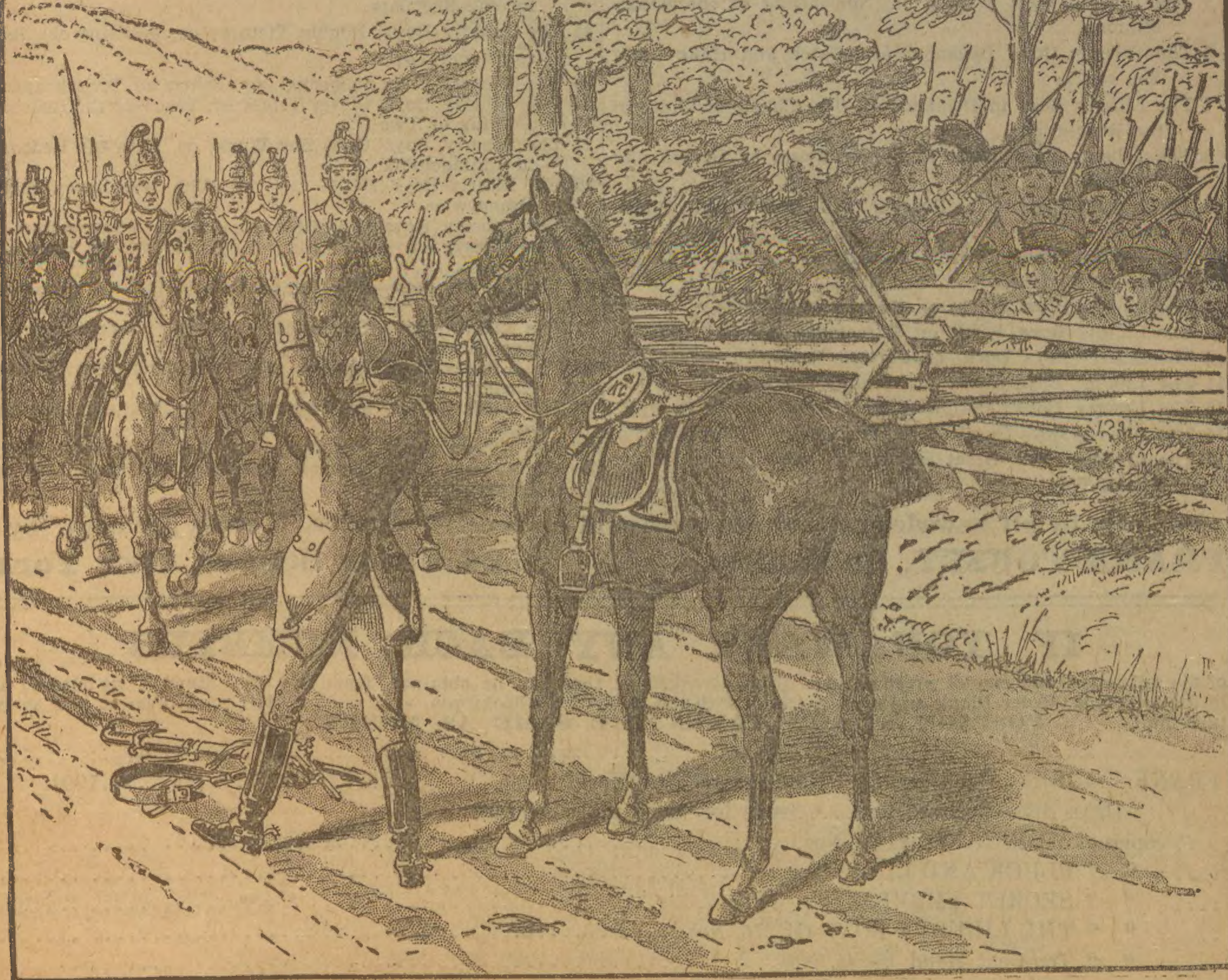
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